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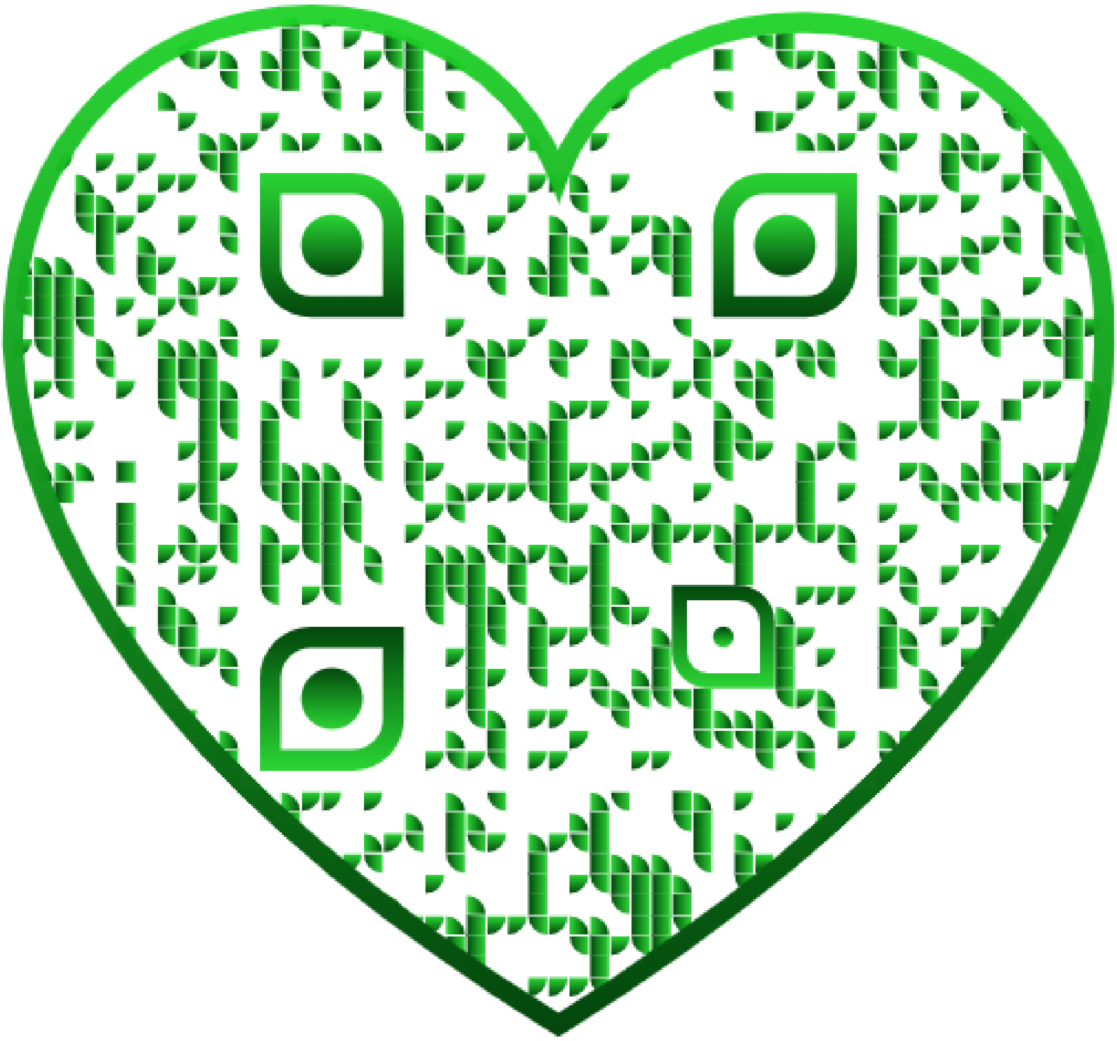

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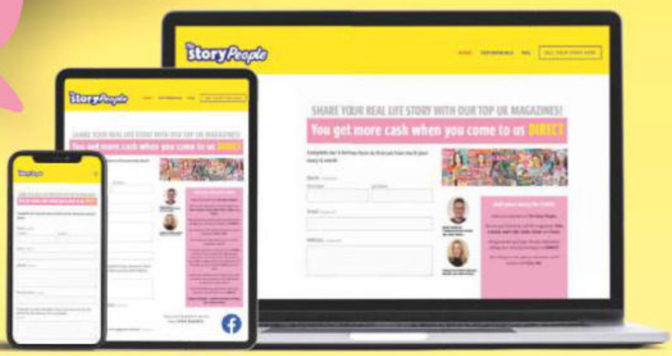
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this week in bella

MR BIGSTUFF IS BACK!

Our favourite estranged brothers return for series two

Danny Dyer is reprising his role as Lee in Sky's hilarious comedy *Mr Bigstuff,* as it returns for a second series. And this time Danny, 47, is reuniting with a former co-star! He's being joined by legendary Linda Henry, 65, who played his character Mick's mum in *EastEnders* – Shirley Carter.

He says, 'Linda is amazing. She's playing Pam, who works in Kirsty's workplace and there's a funny relationship between her and Kirsty that develops throughout the series.

'Linda loved the first series… she messaged me afterwards. It's a bit weird being on screen together because I haven't worked with her since we were both on *EastEnders*.'

Series two picks up two weeks after the fallout of the ending of the first series, which saw Glen (Ryan Sampson) realise his estranged brother Lee (Dyer) hasn't been entirely telling the truth about his situation after emptying his brother and fiancé's wedding fund.

Danny's on-screen brother and show writer Ryan adds, 'It's quite significantly more epic this series. There are just loads of big mad things happening in it. We've got wild stunt-fight sequences. Danny's kicking the s**t out of thirty 80-year-olds at one point!'

P29
REVOLUTION

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By Samuel McManus, **Pictures** Sky UK. **Cover pictures:** Getty, Instagram, Shutterstock

Serving a

Priyanka Chopra

The actor, 42, brought summer elegance in a halterneck white shirt dress by Ralph Lauren.

Joanna Lumley

Joanna, 79, made heatwave chic look effortless in a leopard-print skirt, loose white shirt and deep burgundy sunglasses.

Isla Fisher

The *Wedding Crashers* star, 49, served sun-drenched Italian energy in a lemon-print Monique Lhuillier dress and a dainty white bag.

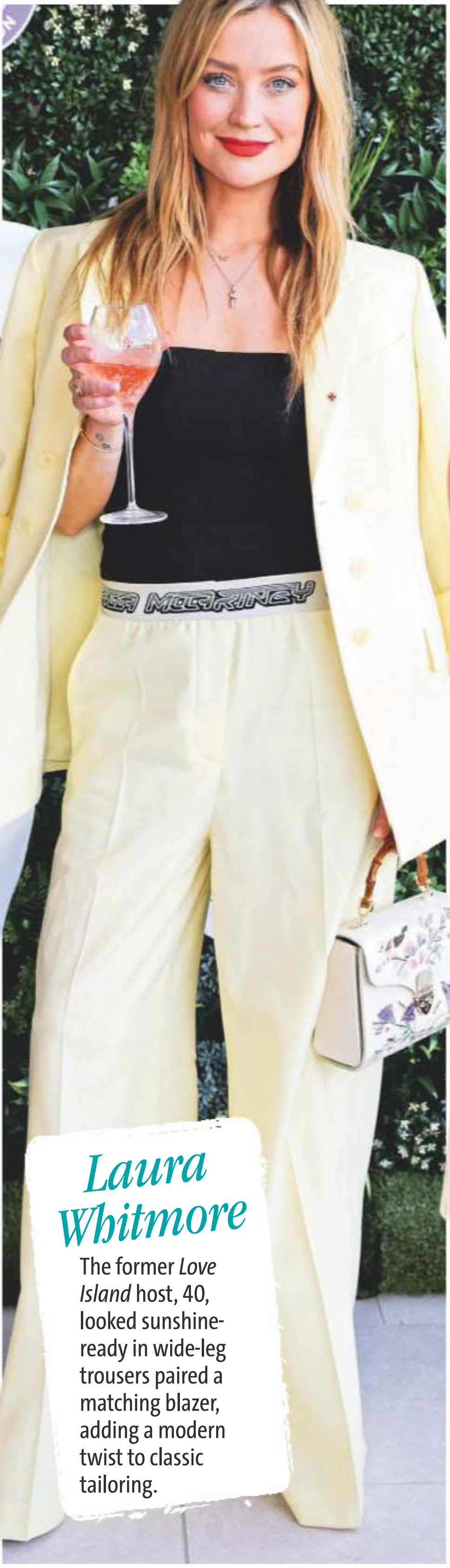
Rochelle Humes

Rochelle, 36, kept it classy in the heat in tailored cropped trousers, sleek sandals and a sculptural blazer by De Savary London.

By Helena Holdsworth, **Pictures** Getty

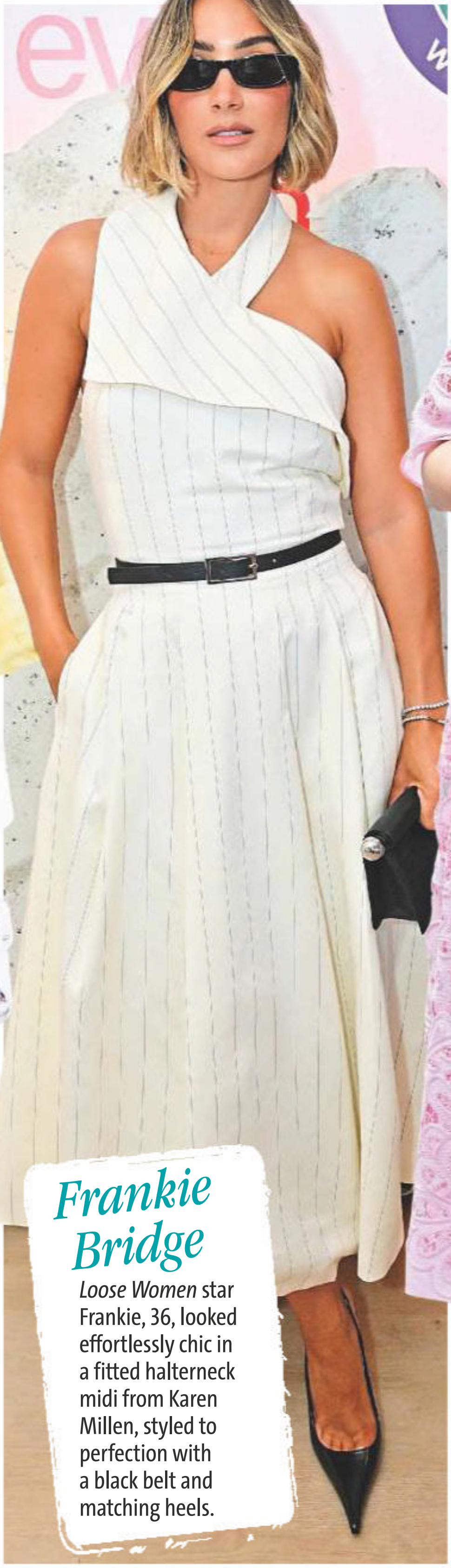
n Ace

The best-dressed celebs at Wimbledon's centre court



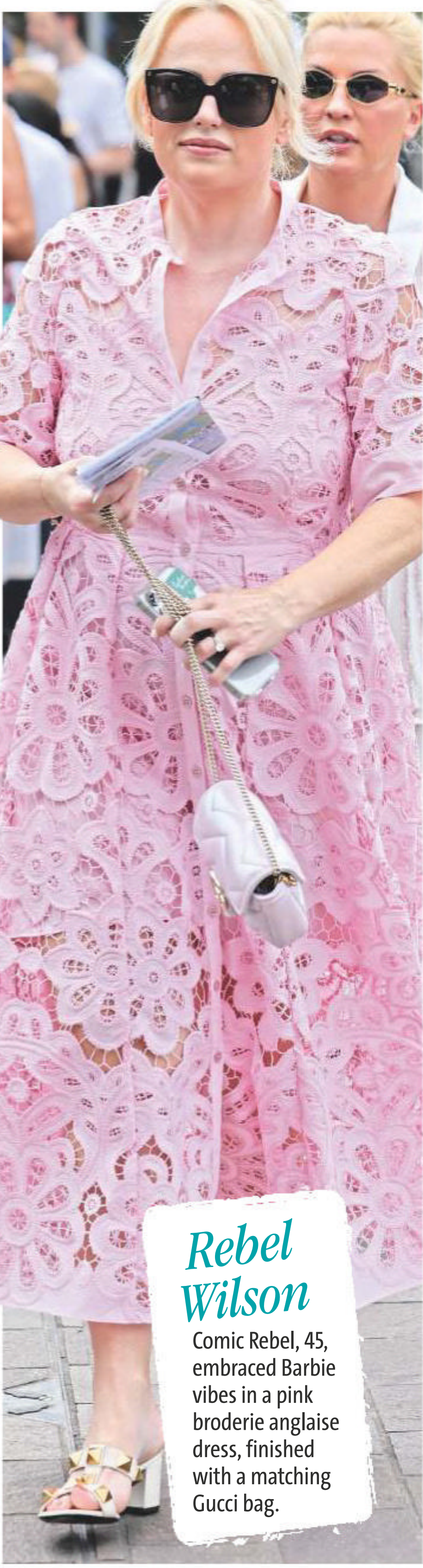
Laura Whitmore

The former *Love Island* host, 40, looked sunshine-ready in wide-leg trousers paired a matching blazer, adding a modern twist to classic tailoring.



Frankie Bridge

Loose Women star Frankie, 36, looked effortlessly chic in a fitted halterneck midi from Karen Millen, styled to perfection with a black belt and matching heels.



Rebel Wilson

Comic Rebel, 45, embraced Barbie vibes in a pink broderie anglaise dress, finished with a matching Gucci bag.

Coleen's got her glam on – now she's looking to get her love life back on track

With ex Michael

'I'm trying to force Ruth into double dating!'

Coleen Nolan has opened up about giving her love life a boost after her split from Michael Jones last year. The *Loose Women* star – who was seen looking sensational at her youngest son Jake's wedding earlier this month – has been single since the break-up but shared that she'd 'probably date again' in the near future because she misses the physical intimacy.

'I do miss hugging and kissing, but not necessarily sex. That said, if I meet him and I fancy him, he's getting it!' she said. 'You can't beat a good snog and there's only so many times I can kiss my boxer dog's crinkly face.'

While she's ready to mingle, Col, 60, revealed that her best friend Ruth Langsford – who separated from husband Eamonn Holmes in May 2024 – isn't quite at the same place yet. 'Ruth's definitely not going on dates yet,' she shared. 'I'm trying to force her into it but she's not having it. And I think she'd be a terrible wingwoman – she'd be too severe and say, "No, you're not right. Get away!"'

The grandmother-to-be – who was previously married to guitarist Ray Fensome and *EastEnders* actor Shane Richie – admitted she's waiting for the right person to come along. Coleen and supermarket logistic manager Michael, who met on dating app Tinder, were together for three years. Referring to her issues finding new love, she shared, 'The men I meet are either married or gay, so I've no hope in the industry I'm in. And I don't go out to bars, unless they're serving me a cup of tea!' But she's not averse to trying the dating apps again, and this time she wants to look for someone who shares her passion for the countryside. 'Apparently, there's one that's aimed at country folk called Muddy Matches so that'll be the one I try,' she said.

After reports that she's planning to give herself a glow up to boost her confidence amid fears of a shake-up on *Loose Women*, Coleen was a vision in green – wearing a floral gown by John Charles complete with hat and handbag – at Jake's nuptials. 'Hand on heart one of the best days of my life, watching my boy marry the love of his life, surrounded by all their family and closest friends,' she posted.

It comes amid talk of the original *Loose Women* stars being replaced by a host of younger presenters, on top of the huge scheduling cuts, which will see it air for just 30 weeks each year. '*Loose Women* isn't ending, which I'm so thankful for, but it's changing. It's going to be very different in the respect of the size of the crew, but it's still running,' Coleen has said. 'Which it should be. There isn't another show that celebrates and supports all women of every size, age, whatever. But it's heartbreaking to see some of my colleagues not knowing what they're going to do.'

KELLY'S SECRET LIFE

Dame Kelly Holmes has said she's finally enjoying living 'authentically' after years of hiding her sexuality. The athletics legend, 55, came out as gay in 2022 with ITV documentary *Being Me*. 'I went through a really bad period where I made a decision to live and not to take my life... I had to do something where it gave me the ability to free myself. I'm still learning about myself,' she told *Attitude*. Dame Kelly served in the Women's Royal Army Corps for 10 years before leaving to pursue athletics at 27. 'Sport was my life, my saviour, who I am. The identity that masked everything else,' she added.

'I've stuck by Ozzy because I love him'

Sharon Osbourne has declared her undying love for rocker husband Ozzy after his band Black Sabbath performed their last ever gig. The reality TV star, who's been his manager for more than four decades, said, 'We have been together for over 50 years. I have stuck by him because I love him. It is simple. I understand him and why he does the things he does.' Sharon, 71, also declared her management career is over. 'I've been doing this since I was 15, and I'm done. We just want to live our life and not follow an itinerary anymore.'

By Shereen Low, **Pictures:** Instagram, Shutterstock, Getty, ITV

Vicky 'wows' Strictly bosses

Former *Geordie Shore* star Vicky Pattison could soon be donning sequins as she's rumoured to be joining this year's *Strictly Come Dancing*. The *I'm A Celeb* 2015 winner has reportedly been offered a deal after impressing the show's bosses when she supported Pete Wicks last year. 'Vicky was in awe of the detail that goes into every performance. She has great energy and will no doubt be a hit with the viewers,' an insider said. 'Vicky's done plenty of reality shows but is ready to be out of her comfort zone on the dance floor.' A *Strictly* stint would top a fab 12 months for Vicky, 37, as she celebrates her first wedding anniversary with Ercan Ramadan in August.

WEEK IN PICS

Third time lucky

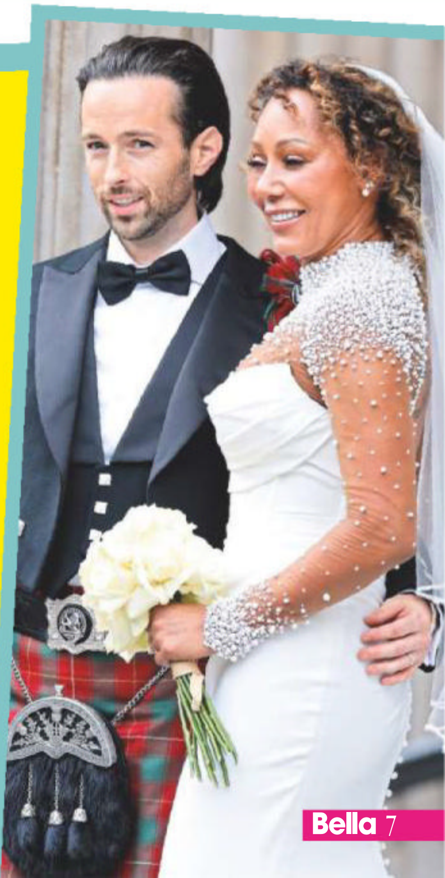
Brian McFadden, 45, will be hoping third time's the charm as he married teacher Danielle Parkinson. The Boyzlife singer's daughters Molly, 23, and Lilly-Sue, 22, whom he shares with ex-wife Kerry Katona, attended the beach wedding in Cornwall.

Noel's NZ nuptials

It'll be fifth time lucky for Noel Edmonds and wife Liz Davies, who are set to walk up the aisle again. The 76-year-old star, who first married the make-up artist in 2009, proposed in a hot tub. He said, 'We've done four, but we want a Kiwi one.'

Scary ties the knot

Mel B, 50 – aka Scary Spice – has tied the knot with hairstylist Rory McPhee at St Paul's Cathedral in London. Emma Bunton was her only Spice Girls bandmate to attend her third nuptials, with Victoria Beckham, Geri Halliwell and Mel C noticeably absent.



Exclusive

‘Kate must fully recover – they can’t do it without her’

Kate is preparing for changes ahead

As the Princess of Wales rebuilds her strength after cancer, royal insiders say The Firm is determined to get their ‘ace card’ ready for her next big steps in the monarchy…

The princess attended a state banquet at Windsor Castle

It’s been an incredibly tough 16 months for Kate Middleton since she confirmed her worrying cancer diagnosis last year. However, since revealing in January that she’s in remission, she’s been slowly returning to public events to the delight of royal watchers.

Last week, the Princess of Wales, 43, attended a state banquet at Windsor Castle, which was hosted by King Charles in honour of French President Emmanuel Macron. And as *Bella* went to press, she was also expected to attend the Wimbledon final.

She confirmed her cancer diagnosis in March 2024

As patron of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club since 2016, Kate traditionally presents the trophies to the winners of the men’s and women’s finals. While she missed last year’s women’s final, she received a standing ovation at the men’s final, which marked her second public appearance since she announced her diagnosis.

But after pulling out of Royal Ascot in June, royal insiders reveal there are fears Kate is jumping into work too soon. ‘Kate’s health is the number-one priority for The Firm,’ a source says. ‘She’s seen as being central to the future of the monarchy, and her presence is considered vital as the royal family look ahead.

‘Kate’s being given the space and time she needs to fully recover, with the focus on ensuring she’s ready to step forward when it truly counts. She is pivotal to the future of the Crown. She is the royal family’s ace card. There’s most certainly a long road ahead and they can’t do it without her.’

‘Kate is vital to the royals’

In a candid chat during a visit to the RHS Wellbeing Centre at Colchester Hospital earlier this month, Kate opened up about life now that she’s completed chemotherapy. ‘You put on a sort of brave face, stoicism through treatment, but actually, the phase afterwards is really difficult,’ she admitted.

‘You’re not necessarily under the clinical team any longer, but you’re not able to function normally at home as you perhaps once used to. You have to find your new normal and that takes time… and it’s a roller coaster, it’s not smooth, like you expect it to be. But the reality is you go through hard times.’

As she continues to recover, it’s understood the Princess of Wales is now looking forward to a long summer break. Joined by her husband of 14 years, Prince William, 43, and their children Prince George, 11, Princess Charlotte, 10, and seven-year-old Prince Louis, we’re told that she will enjoy a family retreat to Anmer Hall, their country residence in Norfolk. The family have also reportedly been invited to spend time at the Duke of Westminster’s La Garganta estate in southern Spain.

On Buckingham Palace balcony for Trooping the Colour in June

'Family time has always been the main priority for both William and Kate,' the source says. 'The children come before work commitments, so if Kate isn't feeling her best, that's when plans are reassessed. This summer will be about Kate spending quality time with the children while recharging her batteries.

'They're a very close-knit family. There's a shared understanding behind the scenes that when the moment comes, Kate will need to be at her best, so this period of rest is key to making sure she's fully prepared.' However, it seems that Kate will need to make the most of this break, as there are big plans for her. Our source reveals that she is set to attend a private family gathering at Balmoral – dubbed 'the Balmoral summit' – which is expected to involve high-level talks about the future shape of the monarchy.

'Family members are due to gather from mid-August. Everyone has been invited – including Prince Andrew and the Yorks. Everyone, that is, except for Harry and Meghan. The Sussexes' absence is said to be deliberate, and aides are reportedly bracing for further fallout from Montecito,' the insider says.

'The King is said to be keen to clarify their position and outline his long-term plans for the monarchy. William is also set to outline plans for how his monarchy will look. Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet's futures will be debated, and Harry and Meghan will be a major point of discussion.'

The source adds, 'While no final decisions are expected to be announced immediately, this year's retreat could shape royal direction for years to come.'

With speculation around Charles's health following his own treatment for cancer, Kate is said to be worried about a move to place more work upon the Waleses' shoulders – something she's not sure she could cope with.

The source reveals, 'Kate is dreading the King needing to scale back his duties as that indicates that what's coming next is her and William having to fill those gaps and be asked to take on more. This is where a push and pull has been developing recently between Kensington and Buckingham Palace. Although everyone understands her health comes first, Kate's worst fear is taking on more when she's not sure she can cope with it.'

'She needs to be at her best'

Kate's involvement in such talks shows just how far she has come within the royal family. In a stark contrast to the current reliance on her as a pivotal member of the royals, it was revealed in 2019 that the late Queen initially had 'grave concerns' about Kate, as she didn't have a full-time job after college. 'A future member of the family without a full-time job was unacceptable,' wrote royal biographer Katie Nicholl.

With husband Prince William

But now, Kate has one of the biggest jobs of all. As *Bella* previously reported, Charles's funeral plans were revealed at the end of June, and are said to involve all of the senior royals – including his estranged son Harry, 40, daughter-in-law Meghan, 43, and grandchildren Archie, six, and four-year-old Lilibet.

And with relations between The Firm and Harry still at rock bottom, a second source tells us that the monarch – who was also diagnosed with cancer last year – is relying on Kate to bring Harry back into the fold.

'Kate and Charles agree that it's right to involve Harry,' they reveal. 'Charles has had enough of the fighting – he wants his youngest son back, so is counting on Kate to smooth things over with William. Kate agrees, and has promised Charles that she'll do everything she can. They're working together and feel confident that William will be won over.'

By Sophie Cockerham, **Pictures:** Getty, Backgrid

Fiona'
'I nev
woul

With husband Martin Frizell

Three years after her traumatic diagnosis with Alzheimer's disease, Fiona Phillips has opened up about her struggle with the symptoms of the condition in an emotional new memoir.

The 64-year-old went public with her health battle in July 2023, just one year after being told she had developed the neurodegenerative disease, and has now detailed the harrowing impact it has had on her life and her marriage to TV producer husband Martin Frizell, 66.

In the book, former *GMTV* host Fiona reveals how the couple – who wed in 1997 and share sons Nathaniel, 26, and Mackenzie, 23 – temporarily split as their marriage was 'falling apart' – a result of Fiona's then undiagnosed battle with Alzheimer's.

Detailing the time back in 2014 after Martin became the editor of *This Morning*, Fiona writes, 'My marriage was coming under increasing strain. I'm sure the disease was at least partly responsible, but at the time neither of us could see it. I just became more and more disconnected from Martin and the boys.'

She says that Martin told her she had 'zoned out of our family and our marriage' before, in desperation, he announced one evening that he was leaving the family home.

Fiona continues, 'I don't think I ever thought he would leave me completely. It felt much more like he was trying to shock me into behaving differently.'

After three weeks apart, the couple reunited at a hotel in Hampshire to talk things through and got their marriage back on track. However, in 2020 Fiona noticed her behaviour had changed again, initially blaming Long Covid and the menopause.

> 'I'd lost control of my life'

She details, 'I didn't have the hot flushes that a lot of women complain about. For me it was the sense of brain fog and a sense of anxiety that I could rarely shake off. The simplest thing, like going to the bank to ask about my account, would send me into a total panic, and there were mood swings too, which meant even I was finding my behaviour unpredictable. And yet, despite not wanting to be like that, I couldn't do anything about it. I felt I'd lost control over my life.'

A year later, Fiona started undergoing tests with menopause specialist Dr Louise Newson, who had frequently appeared on *This Morning* while Martin was in charge, but after months of HRT treatment, Fiona's condition failed to improve. It was then that she underwent tests for Alzheimer's and was ultimately given her diagnosis.

’s secret marriage split: er thought Martin ld leave me’

As she bravely opens up on her struggle with Alzheimer’s, Fiona Phillips reflects on the strain placed upon her and husband Martin Frizell

Fiona has been sharing the reality of living with Alzheimer’s

Martin – who also writes in the memoir as he helps her piece memories together for the book – emotionally confesses that at times he wishes she’d been diagnosed with cancer rather than Alzheimer’s. He wrote, ‘Being brutally honest, I wish Fiona had contracted cancer instead. It’s a shocking thing to say, but at least then she might have had a chance of a cure, and certainly would have had a treatment pathway and an array of support and care packages. But that’s not there for Alzheimer’s.’

Partnered with Brendan Cole on *Strictly*

He added that he didn’t understand why ‘as bright, educated people, we didn’t think this might be the start of Alzheimer’s stealth attack on Fiona’s mind’, especially as she had cared for both of her parents who had battled the disease. Fiona has previously said her grandparents and uncle had also been ‘crippled’ with Alzheimer’s.

While genetic factors do not guarantee Alzheimer’s will develop, research shows that those who have a parent or sibling living with the disease are more likely to develop it themselves.

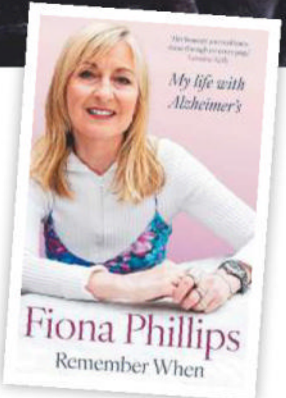
Fiona was juggling taking care of her mum during the height of her career on *GMTV* – which she co-hosted alongside Eamonn Holmes from 1993 until he stepped down in 2005, leaving the show herself in 2008.

She admits she’d been ‘running on empty’ as she hosted *GMTV* for three days a week while writing a newspaper column, presenting a radio show, another TV show and various one-off documentaries during the rest of the week, as well as raising her sons, before driving to Wales to take care of her mother at the weekends, citing a fear that TV bosses would think of her as a ‘washed up old has-been’ if she didn’t continue to work as much as she did.

> ‘She was running on empty’

But she now struggles to do most tasks, with Martin helping her get dressed and brush her teeth. Fiona also devastatingly details how she struggles with memories, likening them to ‘trying to chase a £5 note that’s fallen out of your purse on a gusty day,’ adding, ‘Each time I think I’ve caught it, it whips away again.’

One memory Fiona thinks she has ‘blocked out’ is how badly she was treated during her time on *Strictly Come Dancing* in 2005. After actor Amanda Abbington lodged a complaint about professional dancer Giovanni Pernice in 2023, an investigation was launched, and hundreds of hours of historical rehearsal footage was reviewed.



In one tape, Fiona’s partner Brendan Cole was seen shouting and swearing at the crew, telling her, ‘Pathetic, it’s not good enough!’ with her begging him to ‘stop shouting’ and telling the cameraman that ‘Brendan is looking at me like he’s stepped in something.’

Opening up about her experience in *Remember When: My life with Alzheimer’s*, ‘All I recall is the sense that it was incredibly traumatic. I was on the brink of tears most of the time and felt utterly exhausted.’

By Samuel McManus, **Pictures** Ken McKay, ITV, Shutterstock, Amazon, Pan Macmillan, BBC Archive

Rochelle: 'As soon as trust isn't there I switch off!'

The presenter and former pop star on building her business empire and juggling family life

Rochelle has swapped pop for entrepreneurship

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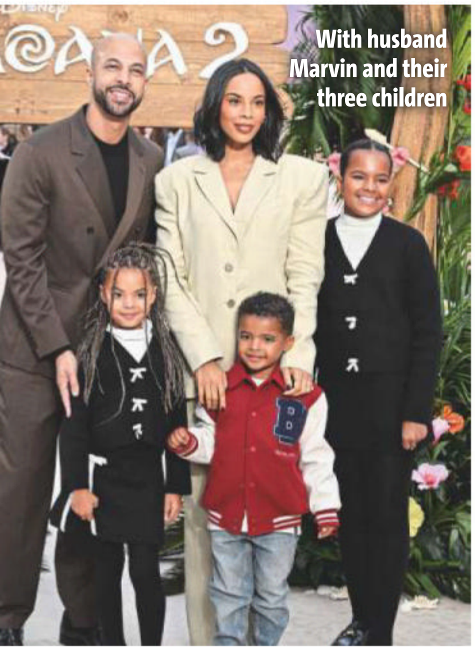
Brightening up our days on *This Morning*

She found fame as a child star in S Club Juniors aged just 11, before graduating from the school of pop to become one-fifth of The Saturdays. But Rochelle Humes has managed to transcend careers and has now pivoted into becoming a TV presenter, podcast host and all-round entrepreneur.


With husband Marvin and their three children

Like her former bandmate, *Loose Women* star Frankie Bridge, the 36-year-old has become a much-loved member of the ITV daytime family as a regular guest host of *This Morning*, filling in for Holly Willoughby when she hosted *I'm A Celebrity*... in 2018 and manning the show the day after Holly sensationally quit after her terrifying kidnap and murder threat.

Now, mum-of-three Rochelle tells us all about home life with her JLS star husband Marvin Humes and why she struggles to see herself retiring...

You spin so many plates, how do you make it look so easy?

Everything's always a juggle. Some weeks, I look back and think we've really smashed it, then the next week I'm like, 'If we make it to Friday, it's going to be a miracle!' My kids are all in school, so a lot of what I do, I fit into that time. Marv does the school run, so I do everything in that window. My mum is really hands-on, too. She's our kids' nanny. We're really fortunate that she's retired and does that for us. I'm able to relax into my work knowing my mum's got it if I'm not there. On the weekends, 98% of the time I don't work. I like to keep that as family time.

> 'I'm a geek – it lights me up'

Do you and Marvin get much alone time?

It depends how busy we are. But we love a date night, or we'll just stay indoors for a cosy night in. But if we do stay home, it isn't always just the two of us. We'll have Netflix on and the kids try to get involved. We're like, 'No, it's bedtime!' The problem is, they all go to bed at different times.

You are Marvin's and your own manager. How do you find that role?

Everything feels like it's gone to a different level since we've taken it into our own hands. No one knows the pair of us better than each other. Trust is so important with

On stage with The Saturdays

anybody I work with and, as soon as trust isn't there or it starts to feel challenged, I sort of switch off.

What are you like as a businesswoman?

I'm detail obsessed. I'm a geek, it's what lights me up. I love Pinterest! I always make time for that because I buzz off it. It's not a chore for me, it's a bit of an obsession. I really believe in building the business around my life and my kids and my world.

Do the kids love your pop star pasts?

I think the kids are quite used to it. But with TikTok, a lot of JLS songs have resurfaced, so Alaia's friends are into them now. She's going to get a few of them tickets to the tour at the end of the year, so she feels quite cool about that.

Any love for The Saturdays at home?

Blake's obsessed with them! I'll go into his room and I can hear them on the speaker. It's so funny. He's such a mummy's boy, so he's so curious about the fact that I did that at one point.

> 'Marv and I love a date night'

Do you think The Saturdays will ever reunite?

Never say never, but I can't picture it. I can't see it in the near future, but you never know. There was no drama with us. We never had a falling out – no one left because somebody hated the other. We've all still got such a great relationship. Una [Healy] was performing at the weekend, so we've all been chatting in the group chat.

We hear that you're building a new home...

I've learnt a different level of patience through this project! We're looking to be in there this time next year.

Are you building your empire now to retire early?

I love what I do, so I don't think so. Obviously, if the phone stopped ringing all the time that would be great, but I love building brands and the idea of bringing something to life. I'll be 80 and still bringing ideas to the table.

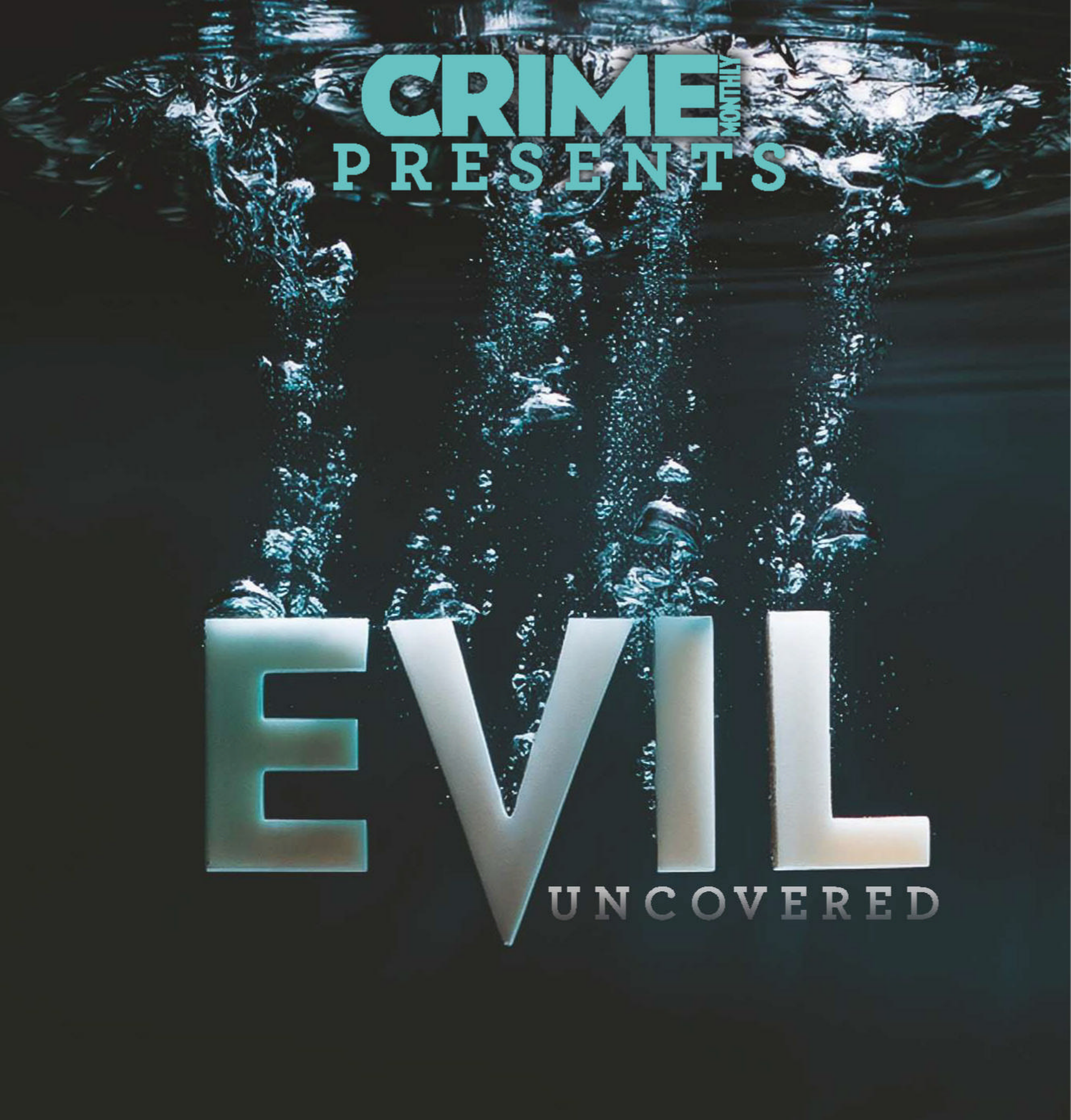
Tell us about teaming up with Dylon...

I'm just obsessed with the scents. It's such a great company and I feel like the team is really tackling the laundry detergent space in a different way. It does so well on the kids' uniform and my gym kit. I've put everyone on to it.

● *Rochelle is the brand ambassador for Dylon Detergent, the laundry detergent that cleans and restores clothes to look and feel like new in just 10 washes. Available at major retailers.*

Teaming up with Dylon

By Afia Kufuor. **Photos:** Getty, Shutterstock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EVIL
UNCOVERED

A BRAND-NEW TRUE-CRIME PODCAST FROM THE MAKERS OF THE BESTSELLING MAGAZINE

AVAILABLE WHEREVER YOU GET YOUR PODS

A woman recently sparked debate online by saying she longed for the return of lockdown so she could pick up her children from school and avoid unwanted social gatherings. ***So we ask…***

Would you want another lockdown?

No ‘I missed hugging my sons’

Faith Eckersall, 60, novelist

Who are these people feeling nostalgic for lockdown? They must be the ones who got 80 per cent of their salary paid by the government yet were still allowed to get a second job.

The type who were, perhaps, able to segue seamlessly from growing heritage veg and baking banana bread to holding family quiz nights because their adult children had moved back home, and it was all such fun.

I was one of the 3.8 million who, because of cruel quirks in the regulations, didn’t get a single penny from the government, leaving a huge dent in my finances.

With one kid in America and the other 100 miles away, there were no family quiz nights for us. Instead, just endless FOMO, FaceTime and many games of Scrabble with my other half, during which I regularly cheated, just to liven it up a bit.

I also volunteered at the local vaccine centre – partly to help the country, but also so I had a legitimate reason to drive out and meet people who were not my husband or the cat.

I missed holidays, going out for a coffee or a cocktail, and visiting museums or art galleries. I missed hugging my sons and the company of my girlfriends.

There were small benefits – I finished my novel and learned how to make a cold lay Tarmac repair to the drive. But the biggest benefit was realising that life is with people, and it would take a direct threat to my life to make me lockdown again.

Yes ‘We were suddenly free’

Penny Harrison, 43, journalist and business storytelling expert

Thinking of lockdown, I’m transported to a field of sunflowers with my children sprawled happily at my feet. We were suddenly free.

Of course, there was the devastation of Covid, not to mention homeschooling and my husband being out as a key worker. But the flip side for me was life changing. As an exhausted mum of two with anxiety, I was frazzled, juggling unpredictable work, endless school demands, family commitments and a social life I couldn’t cope with.

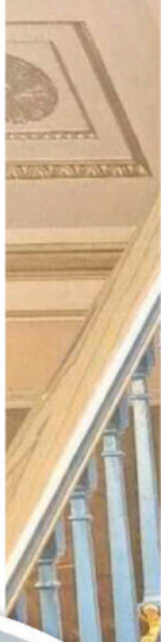
For me, lockdown was like being handed a golden key. No more ferrying people around, no meetings that were impossible to fit in, a solid reason to not invite family round and a guilt-free way to say no to dreaded events. I made memories with the kids and distinctly recall feeling happy and well rested.

We hoped we’d hold onto the lessons of a slower pace, but if anything, life’s more relentless. The transition contributed to a long period of depression for me. The key to freedom had been snatched back.

There’s light at the end of the tunnel, though – reflecting on this topic for *Bella* has reminded me that I need to slow down again.

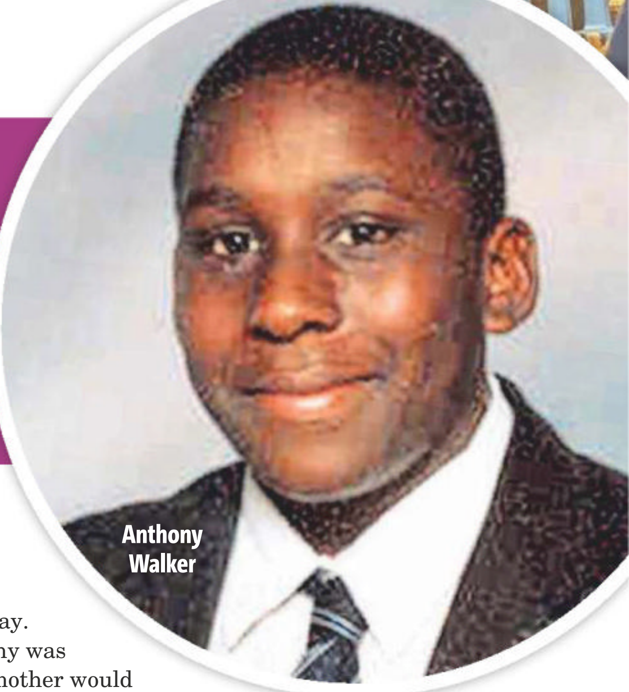
SHARE YOUR VIEW **…with Bella** online at **bellamagazine.co.uk** or on **facebook.com/bellamagazineUK**

By Paula Costas. **Pictures:** Shutterstock



‘I don’t want Anthony’s name to be linked to hate – that’s not what he was about’

20 years ago, Gee Walker’s son Anthony was brutally murdered in a racist attack. Since his death, Gee and her daughter Dominique have been involved in some incredible life-changing work, all in his name…



Anthony Walker

As Gee Walker prepares for the 20th anniversary of something that no mother should ever have to face, she simply describes it as mental torture. ‘When people say it’s been 20 years since Anthony was taken from us, I’m resistant to hear that number,’ she says. ‘All I can see is my 18 year old son, I don’t want to mess up that special image of him. If I go there, I’ll be making too many comparisons – would he have grandchildren? What would they be like? The longing and wondering is too much.’ But Anthony’s sister, Dominique, 39, sees things differently. She says, ‘I do imagine Anthony as 37 – we were 18 months apart and as siblings you always consciously remember that. I think about what he would be doing if he was here today. It’s visceral to me to see that last 20 years of his life. I’ll be 40 soon and he should be here to celebrate with me.’

Anthony loved basketball and music, and was studying law at A-level, as he hoped to become a barrister one day.

Gee says, ‘Anthony was everything any mother would want their child to be. He was kind, considerate, and handsome too. He loved basketball – although he’d never play a match on Sunday, because he always came to church with me. And he only ever wanted to help people. He wanted to go to America and work in civil rights law. He was the father figure in the house – he’d tell his sisters they were out too late or that their dresses were too short. We were a close-knit family, and our house was filled with love. Anthony was going to be a good man.’ The family were just one of two black families who lived in Huyton, a mainly white area of Liverpool, and racism was part of their everyday lives. Gee explains, ‘I love Liverpool and consider myself an honorary Scouser, but there are bad people wherever you go. A couple of weeks before Anthony passed, he was attacked and hit over the head with a cricket bat. I wanted to call the police, but Anthony wouldn’t let me. He said that the assailant was only young, and a criminal record could ruin their life.’

‘Anthony should be here’

On 29 July 2005, Anthony accompanied by his cousin, Marcus, walked his girlfriend, Louise, to the bus stop. As the trio – two black boys and a white girl – passed the door of a pub, 17-year-old Michael Barton hurled racist abuse at the group. Anthony tried to calm the situation, saying they were only waiting for the bus, and began to

Carlsberg
AGNES
…OAD

Tributes left where Anthony was murdered

Gee and her daughter Dominique

move to a different stop. But Barton felt he'd 'lost face', and, along with his cousin, Paul Taylor, 20, pursued Anthony and his friends in a car, driving to a nearby car park where the pair hid in some bushes and ambushed the group.

Louise and Marcus managed to escape and run to get help, but Paul Taylor plunged an ice axe into Anthony's skull, and left him for dead.

Gee recalls, 'Marcus phoned me, but he wasn't making any sense, so he must have given the phone to a passerby, because then a woman told me to go the hospital. I had no idea what was going on, but I didn't for a second think it was something so serious. When I got to the hospital, I arrived before the ambulance, so no one could tell me anything.'

After Anthony was examined, Gee was told that her son's condition was serious.

She says, 'I kept asking to see Anthony, but the doctors didn't want me to because of the state he was in. When they finally allowed me in, the ice axe hadn't been removed from his skull. Thankfully, the doctors were able to cover it, but I'll never forget seeing him like that. Then, they told me that there was nothing they could do for him.'

Anthony passed away in hospital the morning after the attack and, in the days after, Gee was supported by her family. She says, 'We had to try and function, but we were in so much pain.'

'We still live with racism'

A police investigation was launched into Anthony's murder and Dominique, then 20, was determined to track down his killers. Gee explains, 'People didn't want to talk to the police, but they'd talk to Dominique.' The day after her brother's murder, Dominique went to the pub where Michael Barton launched his racist abuse.

After talking to people there, she learnt the names of the people who'd killed Anthony and gave her information to the police. Both Michael Barton and Paul Taylor were arrested five days after the attack. In December 2005, they were handed life sentences for murder.

Surprisingly, Gee says it was easy to forgive them. She says, 'I'm a Christian and forgiveness is second nature to me. Why would I want to hold onto all that pain and anger? And I didn't want Anthony's name to be linked to hate – that's not what he was about.'

A year after the killing, Gee set up the Anthony Walker Foundation to help combat racism and hate crimes in the UK. Gee says, 'As a family, we decided to set up the foundation to educate people, in the hope something like this never happens again. I had to find something bigger than myself to survive. Encouraging his voice to reach people he can't reach, I think it's just a fraction of what Anthony would be doing'

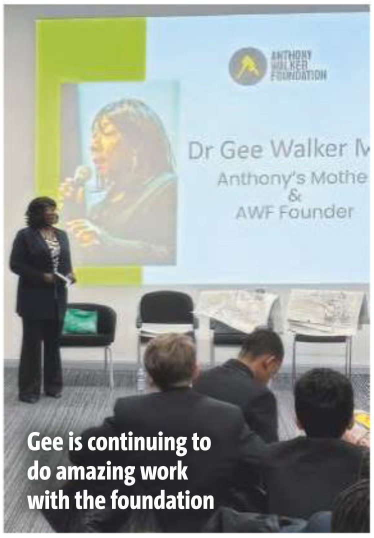
Dominique worked as a hate crime detective for six years, and worked for Merseyside Police for 11 years in total. She is now a senior lecturer and teaches anti-racism in policing. She says, 'We've come a long way in terms of anti-racist practices in schools and professional environments, but where we fall short is to implement them. The reports are being written but only a few of the suggested changes are being made. We need to be putting these into action, listening to victims, and addressing disproportionately. That's part of some of the work that the foundation does: working on racial literacy – we support young people to have a voice.'

Gee adds, 'It's about knowing and understanding, if you don't know, you cannot fix what's broken. We are still living with racism every single day of our lives from generation to generation, but I think people are slowly getting the message.

'We have to fight to say we matter too, but the big word is love – power doesn't mean taking lives, it means saving lives and being kind.'

Already this year they have held 44 workshops on anti-racism in 22 schools, which means 5,700 kids have been engaged. Gee says, 'If it wasn't for the foundation and for forgiveness, Anthony would have been long forgotten by others.'

● *For more information about The Anthony Walker Foundation, and to make a donation towards their work, see anthonywalkerfoundation.com. The foundation are throwing a gala dinner in October to celebrate Anthony's life. For more info, go to anthonywalkerfoundation.com/join-us-for-a-night-of-celebration*



Gee is continuing to do amazing work with the foundation

By Lena Blacker **Pictures:** Shutterstock

'Back in the saddle after LOSING 6st!'

BEFORE
19st 3lb
Size 22-24

Catherine Glazebrook, 40, has found her confidence, freedom – and the woman she used to be

Growing up on a farm, I loved the great outdoors and started riding horses when I was just three. That's where my passion began and as I got older, I rode racehorses for local trainers. That kept me fit and I could eat whatever I wanted and stay in shape. In 2014, when I was 26, I married my husband, Leigh, and wore a size 12 wedding dress. I was still riding regularly but that all changed the following year when I got pregnant with our first daughter, Grainne.

The christening picture that made her want to change

Catherine loves riding again

I stopped riding because it didn't feel safe, and slowly, the weight began to creep on. After Grainne was born, I tried The 1:1 Diet by Cambridge Weight Plan and lost 2st. I loved how the plan worked and even trained to become a consultant. But then came our daughter Rosie in 2017, followed by Mary in 2020, and with each pregnancy, I gained more weight. By the time Mary had arrived, I was a size 20 to 22 at 5ft 11in. I wanted to breastfeed her for a year, so I told myself I'd go back on the plan when she was weaned.

In the meantime, I relaxed my eating habits – perhaps a bit too much. Living in lockdown with a new-born, a toddler while home-schooling my eldest, didn't help. I was constantly baking banana bread, cooking creamy pasta, and grazing on cheese and cocktail sausages, along with the girls' leftovers. Leigh would often bring home takeaway kebabs, and the drive-thru Costa became our regular family outing. I'd treat myself to a coconut latte and a slice of cake. 'I need the calories for breastfeeding,' I told myself. I was still working part-time as a consultant for the plan, but as everything was over Zoom, I could hide behind the screen. I kept justifying my weight gain, telling clients I had three young kids and was breastfeeding, but deep down, I wasn't happy.

In October 2021, we had a joint christening for Rosie and Mary. I wore a beautiful blue dress in a size 22 and convinced myself I looked nice. But when I saw the photos, I was shocked. I looked ten years older, bloated and completely exhausted. I promised myself that I would get back on the plan once Mary had been weaned and by the end of the year, she was more interested in scrambled eggs than my breast milk. 'No more excuses,' I vowed. I let myself enjoy Christmas and threw a dinner party for friends

AFTER
13st 7lb
Size 12-14

on New Year's Eve. 'As of tomorrow, please don't invite me anywhere – not even for coffee for the foreseeable,' I announced. 'I've got five stone to lose and I'm going back on plan.' Everyone assured me I was lovely as I was, but when I explained that this was about getting my confidence and identity back, they understood and promised to support me which really helped.

In January 2022, I started Step 1b of the The 1:1 Diet by Cambridge Weight Plan which meant four products a day and up to three litres of water. I stepped on the scales for the first time in years and saw 19st 3lb. It was a shock, but it motivated me. The first few days were tough. I craved sugar and salt, but within a week, I felt better. I was sleeping well and my head was clearer. To stay accountable, I started posting daily on Instagram. I shared an emotional video explaining why I was doing it, and the response was overwhelming. Old clients and new messaged to say how much they related. After one week, I'd lost 11lb. Within 12 weeks, I'd dropped 2st 7lb. I then moved on to Step 3, introducing one healthy meal a day, like steak and salad. I'd try on old clothes to track my progress and share updates online. By five months in, I'd lost 4st and was back in size 16 to 18 clothes.

That summer was full of weddings and a family trip to Ireland, so I relaxed a bit. But by the next summer, I'd gained back a stone. Then someone posted a video of me dancing at an event, and I didn't like what I saw. The very next day, I gave myself some tough love and went back to Step 3. That stone came off within six weeks. By September 2024, I was down to 14st 9lb and feeling great. Then one day, I saw a post on Facebook from a woman local to me looking for someone to ride her horse. I showed it to my mum. 'You should message her,' she said. 'I'll do it later,' I replied. But the truth was, I was scared. I hadn't ridden in nearly 15 years. 'Message her now,' Mum said. Her nudge gave me the courage so I messaged the woman and she invited me to come for a ride.

On the day, I was full of nerves. My legs were like jelly and I had to grip the horses' mane to stay upright. Even the gentlest trot felt like a full-body workout. But I didn't give up. That evening, the woman messaged to say how well I had done and invited me to come back anytime. Now, I ride four or five times a week. It's brought me so much joy and I feel like I've got the old Catherine back. It gets me moving, and has definitely made me fitter and more toned.

I now weigh 13st 7lb and have really toned up through riding. I've also started walking and cycling. I'm back to fully enjoying the great outdoors again, just like I did growing up. To maintain my weight, I still use the plans products. Breakfast is a hot vanilla shake blended with an espresso shot. Lunch is usually scrambled eggs or an omelette and dinner is usually a chicken salad. If I fancy a snack, I have one of the bars with a cup of tea before bed.

In February, I turned 40 and celebrated with a girls' trip to Tenerife. I even organised a beach club day - something I never would've done when I didn't feel good about myself. I wore a bikini for the first time since my honeymoon and now I own about 25 of them! For years, I hid away and lost my sense of identity and confidence. But now I'm finally back in the saddle – quite literally – and it feels amazing.

● *Follow Catherine on Instagram @121diet_catherine.glazebrook*

DIET BEFORE

Breakfast: Kids' leftover brekkie, buttered toast and cereal
Lunch: Jacket potato loaded with cheese and beans
Dinner: Takeaway kebab with chips, or homemade spaghetti Carbonara
Snacks: Cocktail sausages, cheese, biscuits, crisps, cake

DIET AFTER

Breakfast: 1:1 vanilla shake blended with an espresso shot
Lunch: Tomato omelette
Dinner: Prawn stir-fry or chicken salad
Snacks: Hardboiled egg, 11:1 bar

By Elaine Hayward and Jade Beecroft

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Cool co-ords

Top, 6-22, Primark, £10

Top, S-L, John Lewis, £49

Trousers, S-L, John Lewis, £49

Trousers, 6-22, Primark, £12

Take the effort out of ensemble building by popping on an easy, breezy summer set

Shirt, 8-18, KBX at knickerbox.com, £22

Shorts, 8-18, KBX at knickerbox.com, £18

GOT YOU COVERED

The ultimate throw-on pieces that will take you from sunbathing to sunset cocktails in a breeze

Shirt, S-XXL, **£45,** Trousers, S-XXL, **£45,** Bag, **£55,** all Monsoon

Continued over the page...

Sunny Sarongs

Sarong, S-L, Accessorize, £27

Highlight your waist by tying the sarong slightly above your hips or wrap it into a dress style to show curves

Sarong, one size, Marks & Spencer, £25

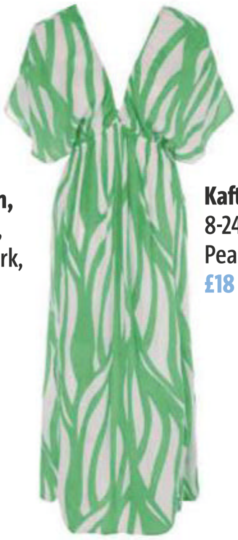
Sarong, one Size, John Lewis, £29

Sarong, one size, Monsoon, £39

Sarong, S-XL, River Island, £32

Luxe Kaftans

Kaftan, XS-XL, Primark, £12



Kaftan, 8-24, Peacocks, £18

Kaftan, XS-XL, Accessorize, £45

Kaftan, XS-XXL, H&M, £12.99

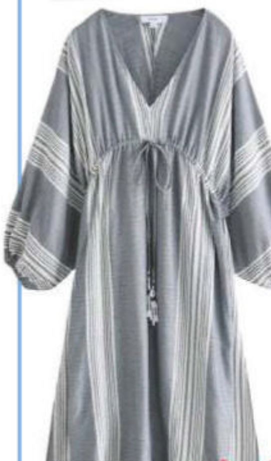
When it comes to looking expensive on a budget, it doesn't get better than a floaty kaftan

Kaftan, XS-XL, Primark, £7

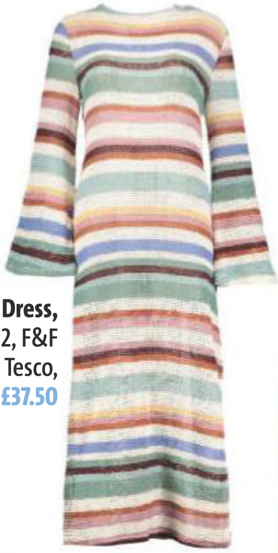
Kaftan, XS-XL, £49; **Bikini top,** 6-20, £35, both Sosandar; **Sunglasses and bracelet,** both Stylist's own

Shirt, 6-22, £28; **Swimsuit,** 6-22, £36, both Next

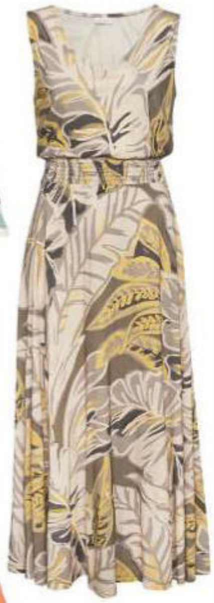
Fabulous Frocks



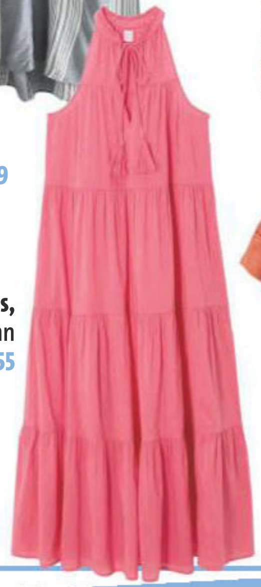
Dress, S-XL, Next, £49



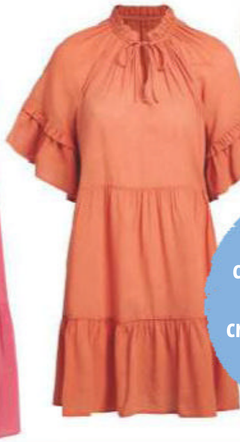
Dress, 6-22, F&F at Tesco, £37.50



Dress, 8-20, Lascana at Freemans, £45



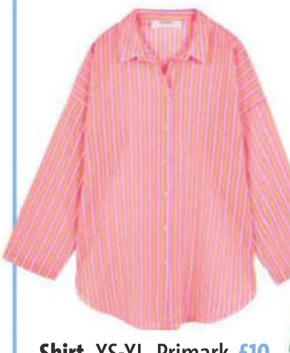
Dress, S-L, John Lewis, £55



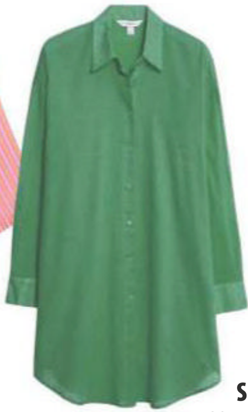
Dress, 6-24, Tu Clothing, £18

Need a little extra coverage for a local lunch? A linen or crochet dress will do the job nicely

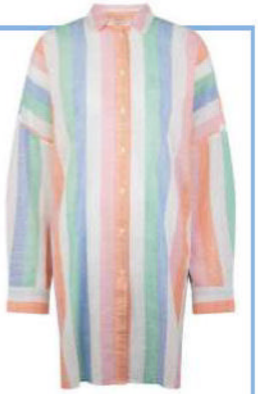
Smart Shirts



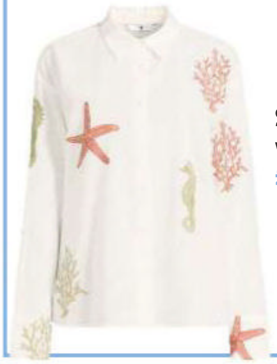
Shirt, XS-XL, Primark, £10



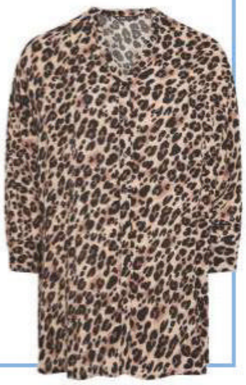
Shirt, XS-XL, Marks & Spencer, £25



Shirt, XS-XL, George at ASDA, £14



Shirt, S-XL, very.co.uk, £30



Shirt, 14-32, Yours Clothing, £24.99

Restyle this timeless staple with a pair of wide-leg trousers for a day in the town

By Lauren Goodwin-Grafton

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Earrings, H&M, £27.99

Bangles, Primark, £4

Earrings, Stradivarius, £12.99

Under THE SEA

Make a splash with these ocean-inspired buys

Shirt, 6-24, £35; **Bikini top,** 6-18, £25; **Spiral necklace,** £16.50; **Shell necklace,** £20, all Marks & Spencer

Hair clips, New Look, £5.99

Bag charm, Accessorize, £12

Necklace, Bershka, £12.99

Bag, Oliver Bonas, £25

Sandals, New Look, £27.99

Heels, River Island, £42

Bag, Primark, £16

Hair clips, Marks & Spencer, £7.50

Bag, River Island, £38

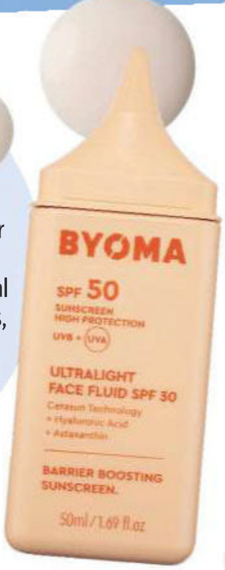
By Ella Shire

Holiday Bea

Daily Defence

Face SPF should be worn all year round, no matter the weather. Ideal for hot days, this sunscreen feels ultra-lightweight and has a host of additional benefits – helping to minimise redness, boost brightness and strengthen your skin barrier.

Byoma Ultralight Face Fluid SPF50, £15



Pout Perfector

In between sipping cocktails, keep your lips looking moisturised and glowy with Lanolips' hybrid balm gloss that delivers a hydrating tint of colour. There's the added bonus of SPF30 protection too.

Lanolips Tinted SPF30 Balm in Rose, £8.99

Jet, Set, Hydrate

After a day under the rays, make sure to replenish moisture levels with a nourishing body butter. This one combines botanical oils with shea butter and squalane to lock in hydration and leave limbs glowing. Plant-based peptides help to boost skin firmness, too.

Naturium The Glow Getter Multi-Oil Body Butter, £22

Smooth Operator

A true holiday hair hero, use this leave-in conditioner on damp or dry locks to shield from heat styling, reduce frizz and add shine. It's also formulated with UV filters to help defend strands from the drying effects of the sun.

Bumble and bumble Hairdresser's Invisible Oil Heat/UV Protective Primer, from £16

Sun Smart

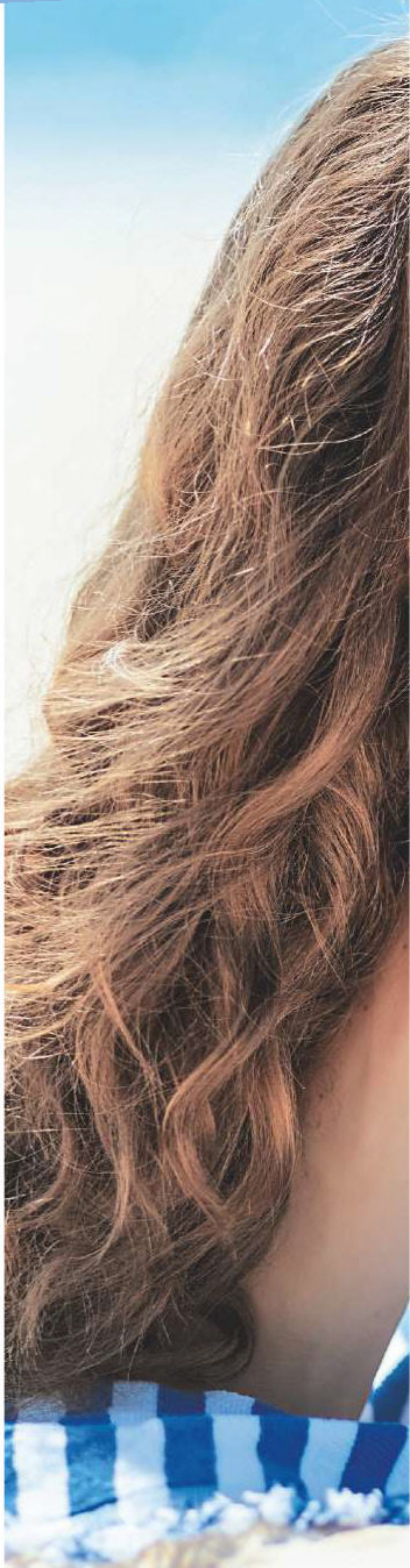
Protect like a pro with Lancaster's high-performance sunscreen. It's lightweight, non-sticky and super-breathable and features a tan activator complex to encourage a natural-looking glow.

Lancaster Sun Beauty Body Milk SPF50, £27

Bronzed Goddess

Before heading out for the evening, give your limbs an instant glow-up with a shimmery body oil that leaves a sun-kissed sheen. Infused with nourishing squalane, macadamia, and coconut oils, it also deeply hydrates skin.

Coco & Eve Antioxidant Glow Shimmer Body Oil, £28



uty Kit

Pack these travel essentials for a flawless getaway

SUNTOUCHABLE
ALL SET FOR SUN
30 BROAD SPECTRUM SPF 30
SPF 30 À LARGE SPECTRE
sun protection + setting spray
protection solaire + spray de fixation
e.l.f.
SKIN

Multitasking Mist

SPF needs to be reapplied every two hours and the easiest way to do so is with a mist. Perfect for spritzing over make-up, e.l.f.'s formula doubles up as a setting spray – keeping your look in place even in the heat. **e.l.f. Suntouchable All Set for Sun SPF 30,** £14

BRONZE
GODDESS
ESTĒE LAUDER

Summer Bottled

This iconic summertime fragrance was made for sun-soaked adventures. Tropical notes of tiare flower feature alongside creamy coconut and warming amber, sandalwood and vanilla. A sensuous scent that's going straight into our suitcase! **Estée Lauder Bronze Goddess Eau Fraîche Skinscent,** £58 **for 50ml**

MAYBELLINE
LASH SENSATIONAL
WATERPROOF

Waterproof Wonder

If you like to wear your mascara poolside, opt for a waterproof formula that won't give you panda eyes. The curved brush makes layering effortless, giving lashes a fuller, multiplied effect while reaching even the tiniest hairs for maximum volume. **Maybelline Lash Sensational Waterproof Mascara,** £9.99

Fresh Glow

If you're looking for the ultimate summer base, try Charlotte Tilbury's weightless foundation that blurs and smooths skin for a soft-focus, radiant finish. Simply swipe on and blend out for light, yet buildable coverage that lasts all day. **Charlotte Tilbury Unreal Skin Sheer Glow Tint Foundation, £35**

By Emma White, **Picture** Getty

NEW My secret to natural and healthy weight loss

Anne is 57 years old and wasn't happy about how she looked, but a lifestyle change and Fat Burner™ became the central turning point in her life - "I feel happy, Fat Burner™ set my metabolism in motion and has supported my weight loss!"

I'm no longer sad *about my figure*

Anne had become so unhappy with what she saw when she looked in the mirror. "I had deliberately, for many years, avoided the scales. It all started when I went to a work summer party. No matter what dress I tried on, I felt so uncomfortable with my body shape. This prompted me to finally pluck up the courage to step on the scales. This was the wake-up call I desperately needed."

MAKING LIFESTYLE CHANGES FOR THE BETTER

"I decided enough was enough and I needed to make that lifestyle change now. I changed my diet, and I walked a minimum of 10,000 steps every day. I hadn't exercised in 16 years, so I knew it would be a long and slow process."

NATURALLY BURN CALORIES WHILST YOU SLEEP

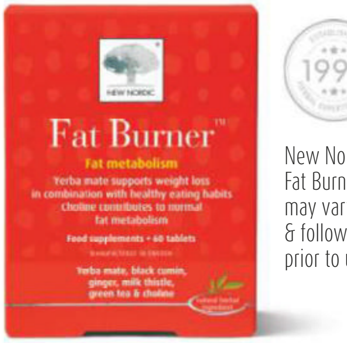
I wanted some support during my weight loss journey and preferably something natural. I saw an advert for Fat Burner™, which contains yerba mate that supports weight loss and choline, which contributes to normal fat metabolism. - I knew I had to try it!

REACHING MY HEALTH GOALS WITH FAT BURNER™

By building these simple yet essential habits, Anne, transformed not only her figure but her life. "Fat Burner has supported my weight loss. I now eat healthy, take time for exercise and I feel happy. This combination has been just right for me. Fat Burner™ has set my metabolism in motion!"

ARE YOU STRUGGLING TO LOSE THE EXTRA WEIGHT?

The health of your body can be determined by genetics; however, it is also a result of lifestyle habits. How you eat, sleep, and live may affect your ability to burn fat 24/7. Maintaining a healthy body weight is vital for prolonged vitality and improved quality of life. Let Fat Burner™ be the support you need to reach your health goals.


NEW NORDIC
Fat Burner™
Fat metabolism
Yerba mate supports weight loss in combination with healthy eating habits
Choline contributes to normal fat metabolism
Food supplements • 60 tablets
Yerba mate, black cumin, ginger, milk thistle, green tea & choline

1990

New Nordic Fat Burner™. Results may vary. Always read & follow instructions prior to use.

✓ Gluten & Dairy Free

✓ Suitable for Vegans

Why Fat Burner™ is so effective!

Fat Burner™ is a premium herbal tablet, based on well-proven ingredients that support effective fat metabolism. The tablet, which is produced in Sweden, contains yerba mate, black cumin, ginger, green tea, milk thistle and the nutrient choline. This unique combination of herbal extracts helps aid your weight loss program and helps support effective fat metabolism. Prioritise your health and embrace the natural excellence of Fat Burner™.

HOME DELIVERY

Order Fat Burner™ today and get it delivered straight to your door.

Go to newnordic.co.uk
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CALL 0800 389 1255

Holland&Barrett amazon - INDEPENDENT - Health Food Stores

Summer Shades

Your new-season lip line-up starts here

Coral Crush

If summer were a lipstick, it would be this. A juicy coral with peachy-pink undertones, it lifts the whole face. Bright but wearable, it's an easy win for warm or olive complexions craving a touch of sunshine.
NARS Afterglow Sensual Shine Lipstick in Truth Or Dare, £28

Burn Bright

Bold yet polished, this orange-red delivers heat without harshness. It's a standout on golden and deeper skintones, and the smoothing matte finish gives lips a plush, modern look. Pair with a bronzer and let the lips do the talking.
No7 Velvet Matte Lipstick, £12.99

ANASTASIA
BEVERLY HILLS

Hint of Pink

This creamy pinky-beige warms up fair to medium skin and, for darker complexions, makes the perfect base for a soft ombré lip. Just add a deeper brown or rose liner, blend gently, and you've got instant dimension.
Anastasia Beverly Hills Satin Lipstick in Tease, £21

Too Faced
LADY
BOLD

Fuchsia Fun

Feeling like your make-up needs a boost? This confident hot pink does the job in one swipe. It's seriously striking on medium to dark skin, looks gorgeous blotted down for a more casual, soft-focus take – and even smells like chocolate raspberries. Yum!
Too Faced Lady Bold Cream Lipstick in Power Move, £25

MAYBELLINE
NEW YORK
SUPER STAY
MATTE INK

Red Revival

Red for summer? Absolutely – just make it punchy. This bright, tomato-red matte stays put through heatwaves and Aperol spritzes. The bold hue adds life to all skintones, and the long-wear formula won't budge even on the hottest days. No liner required.
Maybelline Superstay Matte Ink Liquid Lip in Shot Caller, £10.99

REVOLUTION
MAKEUP REVOLUTION LONDON

Sunset Hues

This cheerful pink has a golden-hour glow about it – fresh, pretty, and just bold enough to bring a flush to the face. It's perfect if you're after something summery but not neon. Try it with dewy skin and minimal make-up for an effortless daytime look.
Makeup Revolution Satin Kiss Lipstick in Cutie, £5

KIKO
MILANO

It's All Rosy

For a more subtle vibe, this creamy rose is a real crowd-pleaser. Balanced perfectly between pink and beige – it sits beautifully on the lips and suits every mood. A brilliant daily lipstick that pairs just as easily with a bold eye as it does bare skin.
KIKO Milano Smart Fusion Lipstick in 403 Soft Rose, £6.49

Purple Reign

If you love colour but want something less classic than red, this vibrant berry shade is a great option. Universally flattering, it brings a hit of colour without being too overpowering. Not to mention, it uses light-diffusing pigments for added glow!
Charlotte Tilbury K.I.S.S.I.N.G Lipstick in Velvet Underground, £29

Weight loss through THE AGES

Expert advice on losing weight, whatever decade you are in

Trying to stay slim, fit and healthy can be tricky at different times of life, because your eating choices, lifestyle and hormonal factors can all add up. Chloe Thomas, nutrition and mindset coach (@_chloeinspires_), reveals the key healthy nutritional and lifestyle solutions to help you get balance anywhere from your 30s to 60-plus. Rachael Sacerdoti, personal trainer and founder of It's So Simple (@itssosimple_rs), shares her top exercises to help you get in shape alongside your weight-management goals. For dumbbell use, start off with a light weight, 0.5-1kg, then increase the weight as you progress.

Chloe Thomas

Rachael Sacerdoti

30s

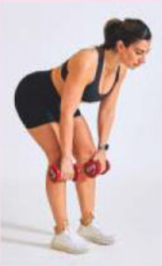
High stress levels can be caused by the double whammy of caring for kids while having a busy workload. 'Heightened stress can cause an increase in cortisol, which can lead to our body storing more stomach fat. This is also the decade where we can suffer from post-pregnancy hormonal changes, which may contribute to emotional and binge eating,' says Chloe.

Nutritional and lifestyle solutions

- Be a meal planner and cook in bulk to save time. Have a weekly list of meals pinned on the fridge to help you keep on a healthy eating track.
- Eat well to be both a good role model to your kids and to keep yourself energised. Always eat from a plate, sitting at the table, instead of grabbing nibbles on the go – which can soon add up.
- If feeling tired, make sure you've got healthy snacks to hand to stop you reaching for high-calorie, fatty treats. Try dates, boiled eggs and mayonnaise, or houmous and vegetable crudities.
- Have three meals a day, even when you're super-busy, or you may over-eat later on. Give each meal a balance of protein and high-fibre foods to keep you feeling full and satisfied.
- Having kids can affect your depth and length of sleep, which can contribute to an increased appetite. Try switching off electronic devices at least an hour before bed, and aim to get to bed earlier to maximise your resting hours.

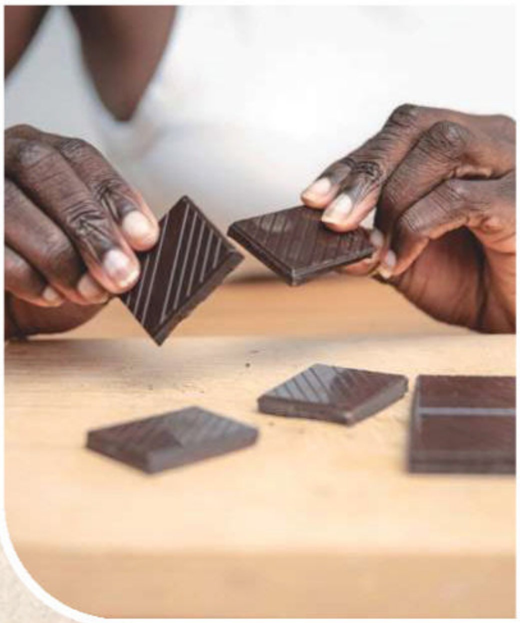
Exercise tips

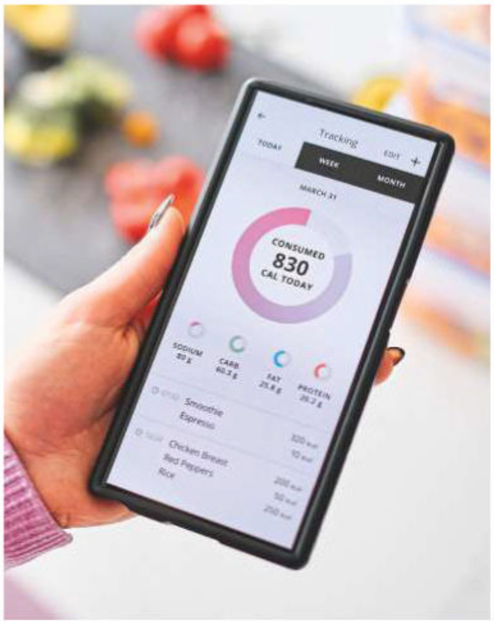
'Women in their 30s benefit from compound movements that build lean muscle and boost metabolism, essential for maintaining the body composition changes that often begin in this decade,' advises Rachael.



1. Romanian deadlift

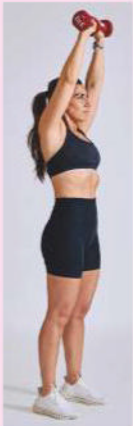
This is a real powerhouse move, targeting the posterior chain that is often weakened by





desk jobs, all the while building strong glutes and hamstrings to create that lifted, toned look 30-something women want. Aim for three sets of 8-12 reps, two to three times per week. Stand with feet hip-width apart, holding dumbbells in front of thighs. Soften knees slightly and hinge at hips, lowering weights down front of legs. Keep back flat and core engaged throughout. Lower until you feel a hamstring stretch, then squeeze glutes to return to standing.

2. Shoulder press



Strong shoulders create a confident posture and help sculpt the upper body definition that enhances any outfit, particularly good as your metabolism starts shifting in your 30s. Aim for three sets of 8-12 reps, two to three times per week. Stand or sit with dumbbells at shoulder height, palms facing forward. Press weights overhead until arms fully extend and lower back down with control. Avoid shrugging shoulders or arching back.

40s

'The perimenopause can begin in this decade. The drop in testosterone and oestrogen can slow down your metabolism and affect your weight, and reduce lean muscle, as well as cause mood changes,' says Chloe.

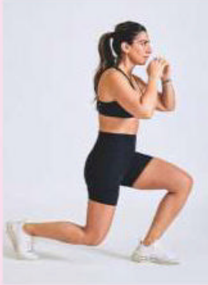
Nutritional and lifestyle solutions

- Try a food diary/tracker on your phone. It can be easier to gain weight now, so be conscious of what you're eating and your portion sizes.
- Eat enough protein, it's helpful to keep you full, aid muscle mass, and also balance your mood. Around 20g of protein per meal is a good amount from this age upwards. Good sources are chicken, fish, eggs, pulses, nuts and seeds.
- Magnesium is calming and can help regulate blood sugar. Good sources are legumes, seeds, soya products, wholegrain bread, fruit and dark chocolate (enjoy a square or two in your downtime).
- Watch your caffeine and sugar intake. It's easy to reach for these to help energise you, but they'll contribute to blood sugar highs and lows, which may end up leaving you more tired and prone to cravings. Instead, drink at least 2 litres of water a day, and enjoy low-caffeine green tea for a gentle energy boost.
- This can be a tricky decade with the stress of work and kids still at play, as well as perimenopausal mood changes. Think about doing activities that are good for your mind as well as your body, like yoga or walking in the park.

Exercise tips

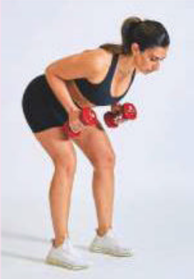
'At 40, women need exercises that combat muscle loss and support bone density, while targeting stubborn areas. This makes functional strength training essential, alongside weight management,' says Rachael.

1. Static reverse lunges



These challenge balance and stability while sculpting the legs and glutes, addressing the muscle loss that accelerates after 40 and helping to maintain that strong, shapely lower body. Aim for three sets of 10-15 pulses per leg, two to three times per week. Step one foot back into lunge position, both knees at 90 degrees, and hold position as you perform small controlled pulses up and down. Keep chest lifted and front knee stacked over ankle. Complete all reps before switching legs.

2. Bent-over row



This move combats the forward posture from daily life while building back strength to create a confident silhouette and support spinal health. Aim for three sets of 10-15 reps, two to three times per week. Hold dumbbells and hinge at hips (like Romanian deadlift position), keeping back flat and pull dumbbells towards waist, squeezing shoulder blades together. Lower with control and repeat. Keep core engaged throughout.

Continued over the page...

50s

'Menopausal hormonal changes can cause insulin resistance, and your metabolism slowing down further, as well as lean muscle loss, which can all affect your weight management and health,' says Chloe.

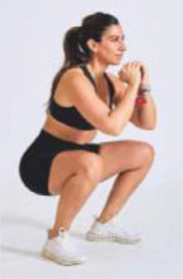
Nutritional and lifestyle solutions

- To help with insulin resistance avoid processed carbs, and cut back on alcohol and sugary foods. Go for wholegrains, and eat three meals a day to keep your blood sugar levels nicely balanced. Keep your carbs to a third of your plate.
- Collagen is a great protein source for this age group, ideal to help suppress hunger hormones, keep your muscles healthy and make you look more youthful too. Try bone broth, chicken with the skin left on, sardines, liver and egg whites. Foods rich in vitamin C help support collagen production in the body, so tuck into citrus fruits and berries.
- Increase your omega fat intake, to help your metabolism, hormonal health and joints. Good sources are nuts, seeds, oily fish and avocados.
- Intermittent fasting may be helpful to manage weight. As we get older our hormones change, our metabolism starts to slow down and we don't burn food the same way we did in our 20s. Having a shorter eating window of eight hours, like 10am to 6pm, can help manage our blood sugars and reduce cravings.
- Give deep breathing (slowly in through the nose and out through the mouth) a go on a regular basis, for calming effects. Try it whenever you've got a spare minute, such as when you're in the shower or out on a walk.

Exercise tips

'In your 50s, maintaining muscle mass and bone density becomes an absolute must. For the best results choose functional movements that mimic daily activities to keep you strong and independent,' advises Rachael.

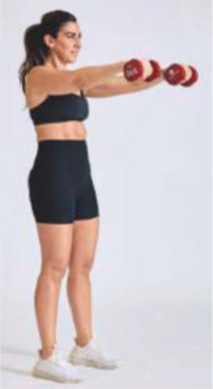
1. Bodyweight or dumbbell squats



Squats are the ultimate functional exercise as they help you get up from chairs and climb stairs with ease, while building the lower body strength that maintains your independence and shape. Targeting large muscle groups also means extra calorie burn! Aim for three sets of 12-20 reps, three times per week. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and push hips back and bend knees to lower into squat. Keep chest up and knees tracking over toes and press through heels to stand back up.

2. Front raises

These isolate the front shoulders, often neglected in daily activities, helping maintain the shoulder mobility and strength needed for overhead tasks while creating shapely, defined arms. Aim for two to three sets of 12-15 reps, two times per week.



Stand holding light dumbbells at sides, palms facing thighs, and raise arms straight in front to shoulder height and lower slowly with control and avoid swinging or using momentum.

60s-plus

'You may well be set in your ways when it comes to eating. But now is the time to concentrate on the quality of your food, and reduce the quantity if you are often sedentary,' says Chloe.

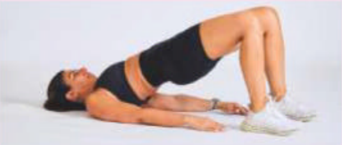
Nutritional and lifestyle solutions

- Keep an eye on your alcohol and sugar intake. Drinks and treats can soon add up, especially if you're not very active. It's a good idea not to drink in the week, ideally save it for the weekends.
- Cholesterol levels may be a focus. Aim to reduce foods high in saturated fat, such as sausages, butter, cheese, cakes and biscuits. Have foods rich in unsaturated fats instead, such as olive oil, nuts, seeds, oily fish and avocados.
- Filling fibre-rich foods are helpful to keep you regular, which may be an issue as you get older, as well as helping to lower cholesterol. Aim for 30g of fibre a day.
- Foods rich in vitamin D are great for your metabolism and bones. Good sources are dairy and plant milks fortified with vitamin D, fortified cereals, oily fish, egg yolks, and red meat.
- Tune in to your body's needs and start to build mindfulness into your life. As an example, create a simple morning ritual, such as some stretching, or a walk in nature, as this can help you feel centred and calm.

By Julia Smurthwaite, **Pictures** Getty, Shutterstock

Exercise tips

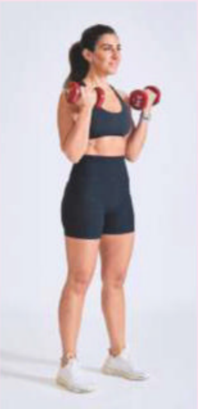
'At 60-plus, the priority is maintaining functional strength and mobility, so gentle but effective exercises that support daily activities while preserving muscle mass are key to successful ageing and weight management,' says Rachael.



1. Glute bridges

This move is super-gentle on the joints while powerfully strengthening the glutes and supporting lower back health. It's an essential exercise for maintaining upright posture and preventing muscle loss that can affect mobility. Aim for two to three sets of 15-20 reps, three to four times per week. Lie on your back with knees bent, feet flat on floor and press through heels and lift hips toward ceiling. Squeeze glutes firmly at the top and lower with control and repeat.

2. Bicep curls

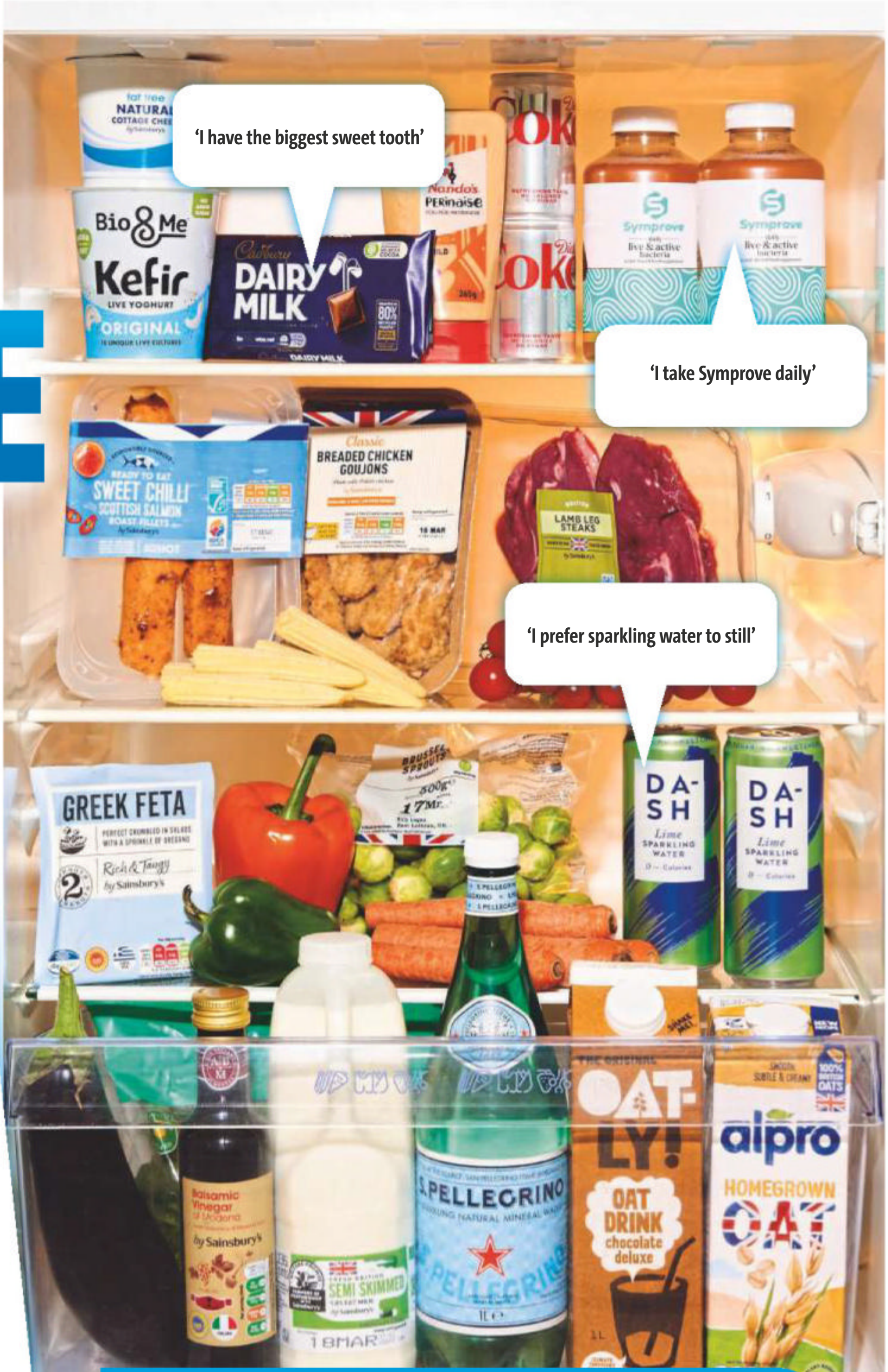


Strong biceps aren't just about appearance, they're essential for carrying groceries, lifting grandchildren and maintaining arm strength that keeps you independent and confident in daily activities. Aim for two to three sets of 12-15 reps, two to three times per week. Stand with arms by your sides, palms facing forward and curl dumbbells toward shoulders, keeping elbows still. Keep elbows close to body throughout movement and lower back down slowly with control.

NB. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, under 18 or have a medical condition please seek professional advice before changing your diet.

CELEB FRIDGE

TV presenter Katie Piper, 41, on her eating habits…


'I have the biggest sweet tooth'
'I take Symprove daily'
'I prefer sparkling water to still'

INSIDE KATIE'S FRIDGE

- Kefir
- Dairy Milk chocolate
- Nando's Perinaise
- Diet Coke cans
- Symprove
- Salmon
- Sweetcorn
- Chicken goujons
- Cherry tomatoes
- Feta cheese
- Peppers
- Carrots
- Brussels sprouts
- Dash Water
- Aubergine
- Balsamic vinegar
- Semi-skimmed milk
- Sparkling water
- Oatly drink
- Alpro oat milk

How much do you spend?

I'd say my weekly food shop comes to around £140. I love popping into the Co-op for little top-ups, but for the big weekly shop, Tesco is my go-to. Now that my girls are older, they've started requesting certain brands. Gone are the days when I could get away with unbranded foods!

Describe your daily diet...

In recent years, I've embraced intermittent fasting. My morning routine starts with a shot of Symprove on an empty stomach, followed by a 10-minute wait before I fill up my Stanley cup with water and have an instant coffee. I don't eat until I'm at work at around 11am, where I break my fast with a protein-packed meal – boiled eggs, balsamic vinegar, some green veggies and chicken. Because my youngest is seven, we always sit down for an early dinner around 5.30pm. It's a home-cooked meal every night, with a few dishes on rotation. Chicken fajitas, shepherd's pie, salmon tortilla wraps and Chinese curry are firm family favourites.

Anything you refuse to eat?

One thing you'll never find in my kitchen is tinned tuna. It reminds me of cat food; I just can't do it!

What would you cook to impress?

My husband Richie [Sutton] and I actually took cooking lessons together, and we've perfected the art of a Sunday roast. Every Christmas, we host around 20 people, and we've got the timings down to a tee. It's like a military operation, but worth it for that golden, crispy roast!

- *Katie is an ambassador for water-based probiotic Symprove*

TAKEAWAY ORDER

CHICKEN SHAWARMA WRAP
I'm not big on takeaways, but if I do cave, it's usually for a Turkish.

COMFORT FOOD

DAIRY MILK
Sofa snacks are my weakness and you can't beat a big bar of Dairy Milk chocolate.

HANGOVER CURE

CARBS
Beige carbs like bread are the only cure. I'm also a firm believer in hair of the dog – it really does work!

By Helena Holdsworth, **Picture:** Shutterstock

Vibrant veg

Feast on these recipes influenced by culinary adventures around the world

Broccoli & lentil salad

Serves 4-6 as part of a meze
Takes 40min

ROASTED VEGETABLES

- 700g broccoli (about 2)
- 140g radishes (about 16 small round ones)
- 2tbsp vegetable oil
- Salt

LENTILS

- 240g puy lentils
- 2tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2tbsp lemon juice
- Salt freshly ground black pepper

CURRIED TAHINI SAUCE

- 120g tahini
- 75ml lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, finely grated
- 1tbsp maple syrup
- 1tsp medium curry powder
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

TOPPINGS

- 6 Medjool dates, pitted and roughly chopped
- 1 small handful chopped parsley or coriander leaves (optional)

1 *Preheat the oven to 200°C/fan 180°C. Break up the broccoli florets and slice off the stalks as they naturally separate. Slice the stalks into thick pieces, the same size as the florets. Put the broccoli and radishes on a large baking sheet and toss with the vegetable oil and ½tsp salt. Roast for 20min, until cooked but still firm, and slightly charred.*

2 *Meanwhile, combine the lentils and 600ml just-boiled water in a saucepan, cover and cook over a medium heat for 25-30min until the lentils are soft but still have some shape. Drain and return to the pan, then dress with the olive oil, lemon juice, ½tsp salt and ¼tsp pepper.*

3 *To make the curried tahini sauce, whisk together the tahini, lemon juice, water, garlic, maple syrup, curry powder, ½tsp salt, and ¼tsp black pepper in a small bowl.*

4 *To serve, spread the lentils in a shallow serving dish, spoon over two-thirds of the tahini sauce, pile the roasted broccoli and radishes on top, drizzle over the remaining tahini sauce, and scatter the dates and herbs (if using) on top.*

Orange, radish & olive salad

Serves 4 *Takes* 20min

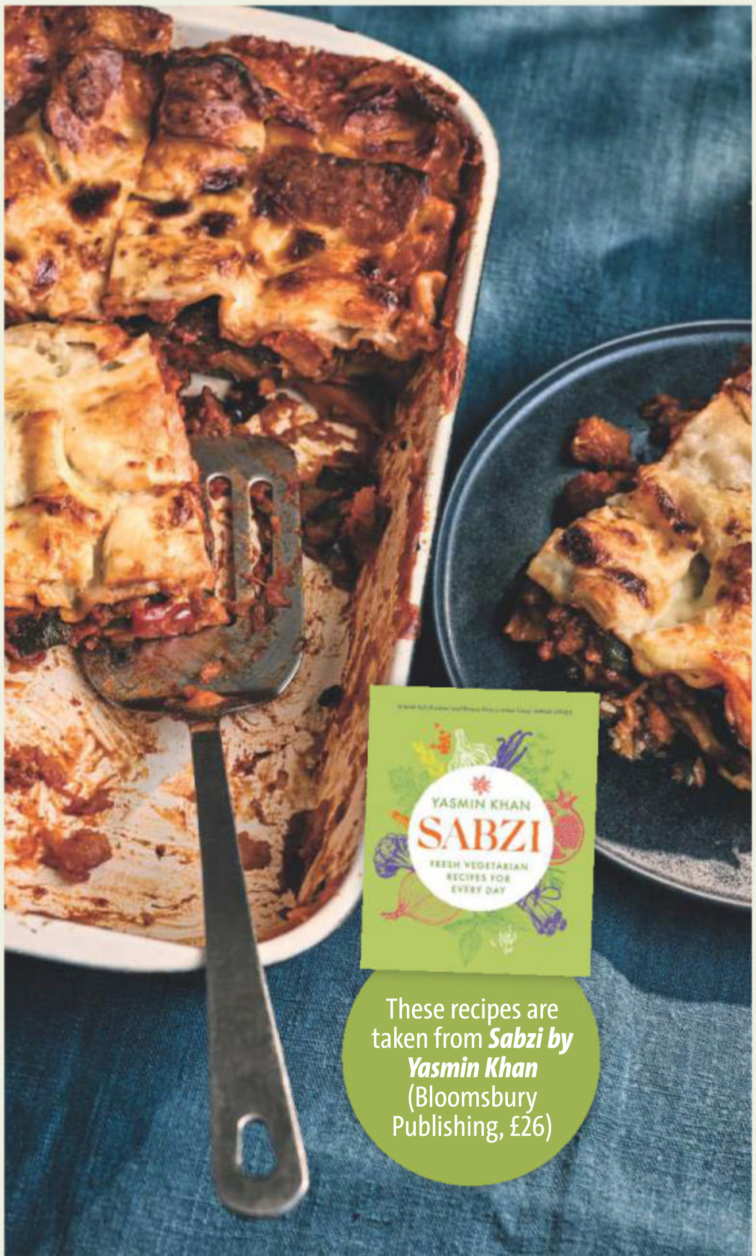
- 2tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 2tbsp lemon juice
- ½ garlic clove, crushed
- ½tsp ground cumin
- ¼tsp sweet paprika
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 5 or 6 blood oranges, or 4 large navel oranges
- 2-3 radishes, very thinly sliced
- 60g Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- Finely chopped coriander leaves, for serving
- Aleppo pepper or other mild chilli flakes, for serving

1 *To make the dressing, whisk together the oil, lemon juice, garlic, cumin, paprika, ¼tsp salt and pepper in a small bowl and set aside for the flavours to infuse.*

2 *Peel the oranges and slice into thin discs. This is best achieved by cutting the top and bottom off each orange, placing it on a chopping board, and using a sharp knife to slice down the sides, removing the ring and pith.*

3 *Put the oranges in a large bowl and pour over the dressing. With your hands, carefully mix in the dressing, then lift out the orange slices and arrange on a serving plate.*

4 *Add the radishes and olives to the bowl with the remainder of the dressing and mix well. Strew the radishes and olives over the oranges, pour over any remaining dressing, and finish with a sprinkle of chopped coriander and chilli flakes.*



These recipes are taken from ***Sabzi* by Yasmin Khan** (Bloomsbury Publishing, £26)

Halloumi lasagne

Serves 4-6 *Takes* 1hr 55min

- 550g peeled and deseeded butternut squash, cut into small pieces
- 450g courgettes, cut into small pieces
- 1 red pepper, cut into small pieces
- 2 medium aubergines, cut into small pieces
- Olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 4 fat garlic cloves, finely grated
- 500ml passata
- 1tsp balsamic vinegar
- 2tsp dried oregano
- 1tsp sweet paprika
- ½tsp Aleppo pepper or other mild chilli flakes
- ½tsp ground cinnamon
- 12 lasagne sheets
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

BÉCHAMEL SAUCE

- 75g butter
- 80g plain flour
- 700ml milk
- ¼tsp ground white pepper
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- 50g finely grated Parmesan
- Salt

TOPPINGS

- 200g pkt halloumi, thinly sliced
- 25g finely grated Parmesan

1 *Preheat the oven to 180°C/fan 160°C. Combine the squash, courgette, pepper and aubergines on a large baking sheet (use two sheets if needed), drizzle with 3tbsp olive oil, season with a generous pinch of salt and mix well with your hands. Roast for 30min or until soft.*

2 *Heat 2tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring, for 12min. Add the garlic and cook for 1min. Stir in the passata, vinegar, oregano paprika, chilli flakes and cinnamon and cook for 5min, stirring. Add the roasted veg and season with ¾tsp salt and ¼tsp black pepper. Add 120ml water to loosen and mix well.*

3 *For the béchamel, combine the butter and flour in a small pan over a low heat, stirring to form a paste. Cook for 3-4min, stirring often. Add the milk, white pepper, and nutmeg, and whisk for 1-2min, until the sauce is thick and smooth. Stir in the Parmesan and ¼tsp salt.*

4 *Spoon one-third of the vegetable mixture into a 2.6l glass baking dish and cover with one-third of the lasagne sheets in a single later. Top with one-third of the béchamel. Repeat with two more layers each of vegetables, pasta and béchamel. Top with the halloumi and Parmesan.*

5 *Cover with foil and bake for 20min. Remove the foil and bake for 25min or until golden brown. Let stand for 10min to allow the filling to settle before cutting the lasagne.*

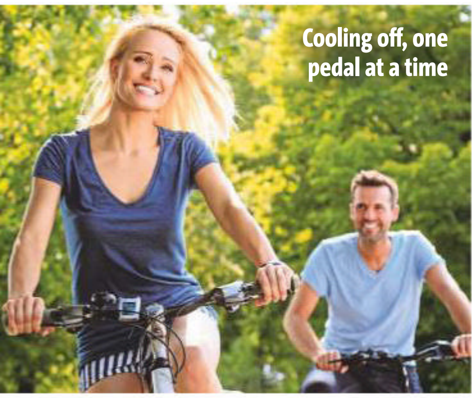
By Hayley Merrick **Recipes** Yasmin Khan **Pictures** Jonathan Gregson

HEATWAVE hacks

Everything you need to feel your best in soaring summer temperatures

Don't sweat it – get strategic

When the sun's blazing, sleep's elusive and even the idea of exercise feels exhausting, it's official: heatwave season has landed. And while sunshine might boost our mood, rising temperatures can take a real toll on our bodies, minds and daily routines.



Cooling off, one pedal at a time

From fatigue and brain fog to full-blown heat exhaustion, knowing how to stay safe and energised in a heatwave isn't just smart, it's essential. Whether you're stuck on a stuffy commute, chasing after kids, or trying to keep your workout momentum going, these expert-approved hacks will help you stay cool, hydrated, and healthy all summer long.

Spot the signs

Heat exhaustion can creep up quicker than you think. And if left untreated, it can progress into heatstroke – a potentially life-threatening emergency.

'Heatstroke happens when your body's ability to regulate its internal temperature breaks down,' explains Dr Angela Rai, GP at The London General Practice. 'It can lead to dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, kidney damage, and even brain swelling or cardiac issues if not treated quickly.'

> 'Waiting until you feel thirsty means you're already dehydrated'

Signs of heat exhaustion include a temperature above 38°C; pale, clammy skin and excessive sweating; headaches, nausea or loss of appetite and feeling very thirsty.

If symptoms don't improve after 30 minutes of rest and cooling down, or if someone shows signs of confusion, seizures, or unresponsiveness, call 999 immediately. 'Babies, young children, elderly people and those with chronic conditions, like heart disease or diabetes, are particularly vulnerable,' Dr Angela adds. 'But anyone can be affected, even indoors or in shaded areas.'

Hydrate better

'Waiting until you feel thirsty means you're already dehydrated,' says Stephanie Baker, Purolabs' nutritionist consultant. Her advice? Try drinking a full glass of water every 30 minutes during a heatwave – and don't forget to add an extra glass for every caffeinated drink you consume.

But staying hydrated isn't just about fluids. When you sweat, your body loses electrolytes, like sodium, potassium and magnesium, which are essential for energy and mental clarity.

Annie Davies, clinical nutritionist at Body Fabulous Health Clinic, recommends adding an electrolyte tablet to your water if you're active. Or, for a quick homemade option, mix 500ml water, ⅛tsp sea salt, 1tbsp lemon juice and 1tsp honey – it's a simple and effective way to replace what your body's losing in the heat.

Eat your water

Food can be a powerful hydration tool. In fact, up to 30% of your daily fluid intake can come from what's on your plate.

'Hydrating foods are a smart way to top up your fluids while nourishing your body,' says Annie. Think of juicy fruits, such as watermelon, strawberries and oranges, along with water-rich veg like cucumber, celery, lettuce and courgette.

Chilled dishes like smoothies, chia puddings or cold soups, such as gazpacho, also work well, with the bonus of being refreshing and easy to digest. 'Chia seeds are particularly helpful,' Annie adds. 'They absorb up to 10 times their weight in water, helping to keep you hydrated for longer.'

To avoid feeling sluggish in the heat, she suggests switching from large, heavy meals to smaller portions every few hours. Raw, cool or lightly cooked dishes tend to sit better when it's hot, while fried or spicy foods may leave you bloated or uncomfortable.

Hydration starts before you're thirsty

Listen to your body

Work out, don't wipe out

When the temperatures climb, keeping up your fitness routine can feel like a challenge, but it doesn't have to mean stopping altogether. 'Summer workouts don't need to be intense to be effective,' says Andy Carr, Head of Fitness at Snap Fitness UK. 'In fact, slowing things down with a "slow fitness" approach can help you stay consistent without risking heat exhaustion.'

He recommends favouring low-impact movement like a gentle swim, a morning or evening walk, a relaxed bike ride or a bodyweight circuit in a shaded park. This type of training, known as LISS – low-intensity steady state – keeps your heart rate stable and your body moving without putting it under unnecessary pressure.

To train safely, Andy advises exercising during the cooler hours, ideally before 11am or after 3pm. Wearing breathable clothing will help your body regulate its temperature more efficiently, and drinking water before, during and after your session is essential. If things start to feel tough, slow down or take a break.

'Consistency beats intensity in the summer,' he says. 'Slowing down doesn't mean stepping back. It's how you avoid injury and maintain momentum. After all, fitness isn't about pushing to the max every time, it's about building habits that support your health all year round.'

Cool your space

Creating a cooler indoor environment can help take the edge off hot days and nights. Annie recommends drawing your blinds or curtains during the sunniest parts of the day and opening windows on opposite sides of your home to create airflow. A cool shower can quickly lower your temperature, while applying a damp cloth to your neck or wrists is a great way to get relief fast.

Keeping a water bottle by your bedside can prompt you to hydrate as soon as you wake up. And for little ones, make hydration fun by offering frozen fruit, DIY slushies or yogurt-based lollies.

> 'Consistency beats intensity in the summer'

Support sleep

It's not just your physical energy that suffers in extreme heat – your mood, motivation and mental focus can also take a hit. 'Heat affects energy levels, hormones and cognitive performance,' says Stephanie. 'If you find yourself feeling anxious, irritable or unfocused, it could be your body signalling it needs to cool down and rehydrate.'

To support sleep and restore mental clarity, she suggests making a few simple changes at night, like cooling your bedroom, switching to breathable bedding such as bamboo, and avoiding screens before bed.

These small steps can help you feel calmer, sleep better and stay more resilient, even on the hottest days.

While we can't control the forecast, we can plan ahead. 'Start hydrating and cooling strategies early,' urges Dr Angela. 'Prevention is always easier than treatment, and it could save you from a medical emergency.'

Top up fluids the tasty way

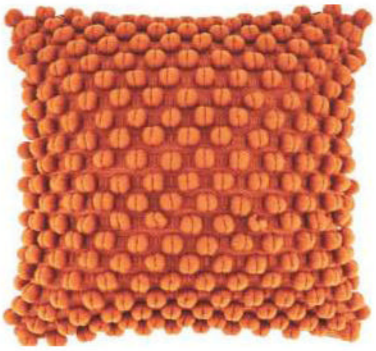
By Emma Hawkins, **Pictures** Getty Images

DOWN TO EARTH

Embrace sun-baked shades this summer, with plaster pink, terracotta and burnt orange buys

Layer natural textures like linen, cotton and ceramic

Shell cushion cover, £22.99; **Embroidered cushion cover,** £14.99; **Matmat side table,** £139.99; **Azalée rug,** from £74.99, all La Redoute



Bobble cushion, Matalan, £15

12-piece dinner set, Habitat, £25

Marcy coffee table, John Lewis & Partners, £35

Scenario plain pillowcase, La Redoute, £12

Sunset Breeze poster, Desenio, £10.95

SUNSET
BREEZE

Salsa lounge chair, John Lewis & Partners, £149 for two

Serena woven lampshade, Pooky, £78

Towels, Homescapes Online, from £3.99

Beaded vase, Habitat, £22

Bolero vase, Oliver Bonas, £32.50

Appolia ceramic baking dish, Peugeot, £52.99

Cushion, Matalan, £18

Geo throw, Oliver Bonas, £29.50

Robyn velvet armchair, £349, Cult Furniture

Pep&Co hanging plant pot, Poundland, £1.40

Dinner candles, Primark, £1.50 for two

Tumblers, £20 for four; **Cereal bowl,** £12 for four; **Dinner plate,** £15 for four; **Wooden cake stand,** £15; **Placemats,** £20 for four; **Wooden serving board,** £20; **Marble serving bowl,** £20; **Tablecloth,** £25; **Linen napkins,** £10 for two, all M&S

Dine al fresco with on-trend amber glassware

Blanket stitch throw, Habitat, £18

By Jo Chapman

THE DARKEST CRIMES AND EVIL MINDS

CRIME MONTHLY

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JULY 2025
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Email: **bella.letters@bauermedia.co.uk**
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£50 Star letter

Ruth's composure

I really enjoyed your article 'Ruth's divorce bombshell will help her heal!'. I am a huge fan of Ruth and absolutely love how she has remained composed and managed to maintain her air of elegance throughout her split from Eamonn. I love her 'Get on with it' attitude! It certainly can't have been easy being in the public eye. I'm really looking forward to reading her 'bombshell book', what she's gone through and how she's living her best life. Wishing Ruth all the very best.

Amanda Melvin, Rossendale, email

Carefree Zara

Your interview with Zara Tindall proved she's a real breath of fresh air. She's so down-to earth and carefree. Princess Anne was wise not to allow her to be stuck with a stuffy title.

Maggie Cobbett, Ripon, email

Talking point

With the cost of children's parties rising, and in an attempt to reduce waste, one parent has enforced a no-present rule at her son's birthday and suggested people give cash instead. We ask if it's OK to directly request money as a present?

I would much rather give cash and know it's going towards what the child wants or needs, than buying yet another toy that's just going to pile up in the corner of their room. I think it's a much better use of money!

Karen Ray, Sheffield

I love this idea and think it's much more practical than just buying junk that they might not want. Not only can it go towards something like a hobby or experience that they like, but it can also teach them the value of money if they want to save up to buy something themselves.

Michelle Lathley, Cambridge

This takes away the thoughtfulness of present giving. When I buy a gift for someone, I put a lot of effort into thinking what they would like and actually use, and replacing that with cold, hard cash just seems so meaningless.

Penny Bosson, Shropshire

I think it's really rude and direct to ask for straight-up cash for your child's birthday. If I want to put a note in a birthday card, then that's my prerogative, but don't tell me what I should gift!

Emily Stanley, Cotswolds

By Amy Lo, **Pictures** Shutterstock, Getty

THIS WEEK Bella LOVES...

Skincare advice

Is your teen finding skincare confusing? Superdrug pharmacists are now offering a free walk-in service where teens can get skincare consultations, self-care advice, treatment recommendations and help busting myths about what they do/don't need. The service is being rolled out in Manchester Piccadilly, Glasgow and Milton Keynes first, with plans for elsewhere in the coming months.

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‘Brave Isaac defi the odds to still be with us’

When Lucy Perry, 30, spotted a special bravery award was up for grabs, she knew exactly who should get it…

Isaac fought for his life after suffering sepsis twice

I peered anxiously at the screen as the sonographer moved the wand over my tummy. It was March 2018, and I was having my 20-week scan, but I had no reason to suspect it would be anything other than normal. Except there was a problem…

The sonographer called a doctor and, after more tests, told me and my partner Nial that our baby boy had something called lymphatic malformation. It meant his lymphatic system hadn’t developed properly and it was particularly affecting his right leg. ‘He might not survive the pregnancy,’ the doctor said. Devastated, we were offered a termination, but decided we had to give our baby every chance of survival.

Every week for the rest of the pregnancy we travelled from our home in Colchester, Essex, to London for extra scans. When our baby boy Isaac finally arrived the following August weighing 8lb 3oz and he was put into my arms, I fell in love with him instantly. We took him home to meet his brother Riley, then three, and settled into life as a family of four.

Isaac recovering

The family all together

Isaac’s condition meant his affected leg was swollen and blistered but otherwise he seemed fine. But one night when he was just four weeks old, he started shaking and his temperature shot up. Nial and I rushed him to hospital where doctors told us our baby had sepsis due to an infection in his bad leg. He recovered after a course of antibiotics, and we hoped it was an isolated incident.

> ‘He might not survive’

As the weeks and months passed, Isaac developed into a sweet, chatty little toddler. We explained to him that he had a poorly leg which he accepted, limping along and trying to keep up with his big brother. When he was two, doctors put him on a year-long course of antibiotics in the hope that this would help him in future. The next year we were blessed with no hospital visits. Isaac rarely complained about his leg and even started nursery. He had a limp but in every other way he was a normal, funny little boy.

In August 2022, we celebrated his fourth birthday with a party in our garden with a bouncy castle and a Thomas the Tank engine birthday cake. But one night a week later, Isaac’s temperature shot up suddenly. ‘Why are there people in my bedroom?’ he asked me. There was no one other than me with him and I realised he was hallucinating.

Nial and I rushed him to A&E where we had to wait eight hours before being told he had tonsillitis and a urine infection but just as we were preparing to go home

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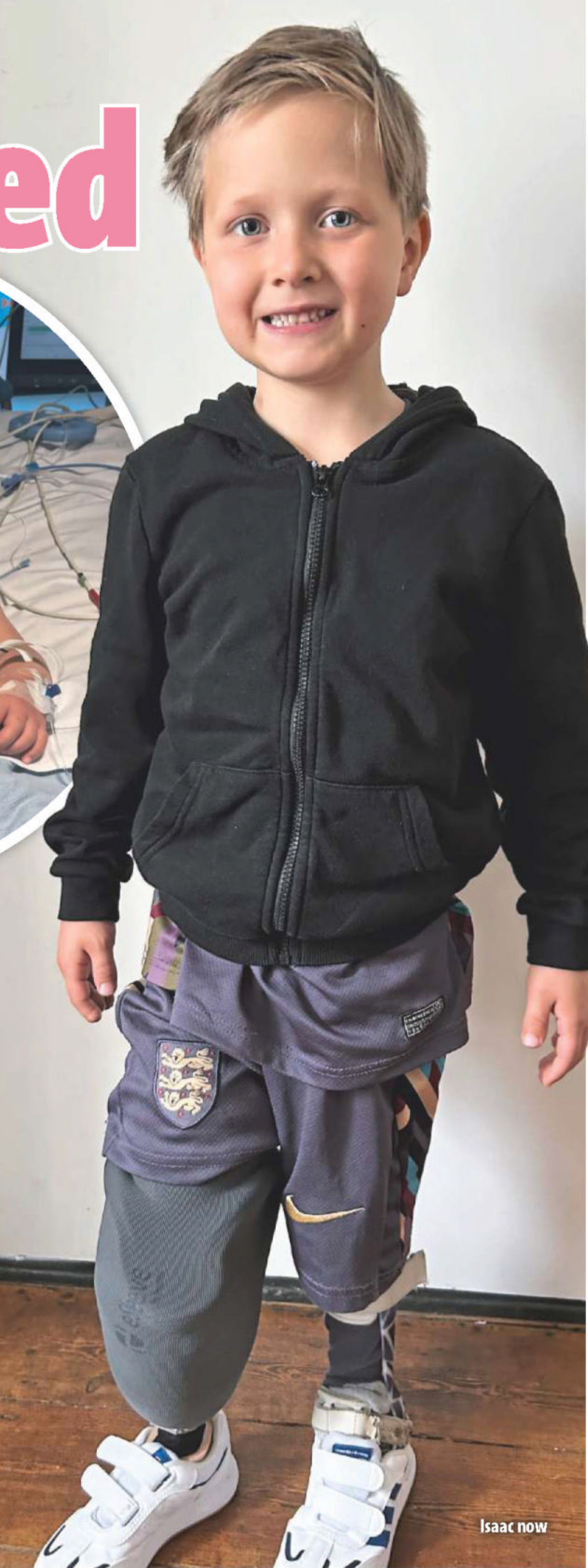

Isaac now

with antibiotics, Isaac went pale and wouldn't wake up.

Within minutes more doctors arrived, carried out blood tests and rushed Isaac into ICU.

'Your son is very unwell, and we've put him into an induced coma,' they told us. We were so shocked we could barely speak. They thought it was sepsis again so transferred him to Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital (GOSH) in London where more tests were carried out. But we were in for a shock.

'I'm so sorry to tell you that Isaac has acute lymphoblastic leukaemia,' the doctor said. What more did my little boy have to go through? I thought. The doctor said they didn't think it was connected to his leg and that there was a 95% chance of recovery, something I clung to. Because Isaac had been in septic shock, he had to spend six weeks in ICU before he could start chemo. All the while I stayed with him while Nial looked after Riley and our youngest daughter Skarlett, then two.

Isaac started a continuous dose of chemo for two months and then returned to hospital every four days for another two months. He was doing well until one day, in January 2023, when he suddenly got very ill. We took him to A&E where blood tests revealed he was going into organ failure and again he was rushed to Great Ormond Street.

As we got into the ambulance, a paramedic turned to me. 'If we need to pull over and do CPR, you will have to step out of the ambulance,' he said. All I could do was pray my little boy would make it. We made it to GOSH where doctors suspected a bowel infection and said they needed to operate immediately. I stood there in tears as the surgeon told me there was a 30% chance of Isaac surviving the operation. 'Just get him back to me,' I cried 'I'll do everything I can to save him,' he replied.

I walked down with Isaac to the operating theatre where the surgeons left me with him for a few moments. Stroking his soft sandy hair, I vowed that I wouldn't say goodbye. 'I love you, darling. I'll see you soon,' I said, tears streaming down my face.

Minutes later, Nial arrived with my mum Sue and we hugged each other for comfort. Two hours later, the surgeon appeared and told us Isaac had survived the operation. The relief was immense, and we later found out the problem had been caused by an infection in his PICC line which delivered drugs into his system. But he wasn't out of the woods yet. While in ICU, Isaac's legs started to turn black. 'If it carries on, we will need to amputate them,' the surgeon said. Even if he loses his legs, at least he's alive, I said to myself.

> 'Just get him back to me'

The next day his left leg had improved but his right leg had got worse. We had to accept amputation below the knee was the only option and once again Isaac was wheeled into theatre. When he returned, it was a shock to see the missing form of his right leg under the blanket. But I still had him, and that was all that mattered. Isaac stayed in hospital for two months where he recovered and had physio.

Fortunately, since that awful time two years ago, my little boy has gone from strength to strength and has had no more infections. He's now six, and mainly gets around by crawling or using his special electric wheelchair at school. He's just got a prosthetic leg, which he's started wearing for two hours a day and will soon hopefully use it more.

He loves wrestling and playing on the Xbox and is pretty much like any other little boy. Our proudest moment came in June 2024 when he was declared cancer free and rang the hospital bell. One day I spotted an advert for the Cancer Research Star Award which acknowledges children's bravery. It felt like Isaac's name was written all over it. When he received his certificate and gold star he was delighted, but I've always known how brave he is.

We almost lost him, but each time he fought back. He lights us up lives and is well and truly our shining star.

By Helen Garston

Dear Kate...

Counsellor Kate Medlin answers your personal, sexual and emotional problems

I don't want his kids to come and stay!

Q My husband has two kids from his previous relationship who live full time with their mum as we live in a different city to them. Since they were very small, they've stayed during the school holidays, including four out of six weeks in the summer. They're eight and five now so being with them full time for that long is quite a slog. Last year, it all felt too much. We never got to spend a moment alone together.

So I asked my husband if he could arrange for them to go to a summer camp or have a childminder for a few days a week. Although he said he would, he hasn't done either of these. I'm not expected to look after them on my own, although I have done when he's had the odd meeting, but mostly, he takes that month off to be with them. The thing is, I crave quiet time. I have arranged my life so that when I'm feeling sociable, I see friends, and then I come home to the quiet sanctuary of my home. But for the whole of that month, I don't have that. I feel like running away.

A It is not always useful as a therapist to simply validate a client's feelings. And while I believe that no feelings are wrong, I think at times we need to question what we do with them. You are allowed to feel put out, even irritated that your step-children interrupt your peaceful life. But what seems to be missing here is any thought for what it might feel like for them. To only see their father for a few weeks a year, and if you got your way, when they do, they're shipped off to childminders and day camps. Perhaps he ignored your request because he didn't want to make those arrangements, but didn't know how to tell you – that's on him. I wonder why you feel so resentful of the children's visits?

Open marriage isn't for me

Q My husband and I were listening to a podcast, and they were talking about open relationships.

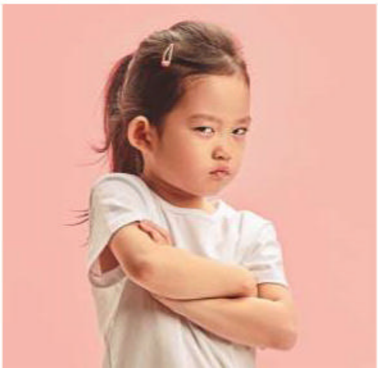
I said that I could never see myself being with someone else and then coming home to him. Or to us having a sexual experience that involves another person. I guess I was hoping he felt the same. But he said that while he doesn't crave it, he could imagine himself in a relationship where both people explored other options either inside or outside of their own bedroom.

I was so surprised by this, and if I'm honest, quite upset. Am I not enough for him? Does this mean one day he'll get bored of being with the same person?

A I understand that you found your husband's answer unsettling, because he doesn't feel the same way as you. And we're led to believe that we have to be on the same page as our partners about these things. But this doesn't mean that he isn't satisfied with you, or is about to run off to the nearest sex party! You've filled in a lot of blanks with your own assumptions. It just means that he could imagine himself being open to it, if you were. And you're not, so it's off the table. Be encouraged by the fact that your husband was open with you, and while you are allowed to feel worried there is no evidence to justify this. Try not to make him feel judged for being honest.

Why can't I just enjoy my baby?

Q I've just had my second baby. There's a four-year age gap, and my lovely angel of a daughter has turned into a little devil! She has had more tantrums in the three months since the baby was born than she's had for the previous four years! She shouts, bites, throws things, breaks toys. She's lovely to her baby brother but vile to me and her dad. It makes me want to spend all my time with my baby. I'm so impatient with her because I'm tired, and she used to be so easy. I'm worried we'll never recover from this.



A First of all, remember that you are in that hectic, crazy, relentless period of having a newborn. Hormones are still flooding through you and the love you feel for your baby drowns out everything else. It's called 'maternal preoccupation'. You're supposed to feel like this! And no matter what the baby books say, there is no way to avoid sibling rivalry. While you want to lock her out and just be left alone, do the opposite. Make extra time for her one-on-one, and remember that

Letters and replies may be edited for length/clarity. **Pictures:** Shutterstock, Getty

Write to **Dear Kate**,
Bella, The Lantern,
75 Hampstead Road,
London, NW1 2PL, or email
bella.advice@bauermedia.co.uk.

Kate will attempt to respond to as many letters as possible through her page

I sense that you feel envious that, for those few weeks, your husband is putting them first. Which makes me imagine what your childhood might have been like. Did anyone put you first? Was there a parent who didn't make the effort to spend time with you? Perhaps it's hard for you to see these kids getting something that you didn't get? Kids are a lot. They're messy, loud, needy and demanding. But you knew that your husband had kids when you got together. You knew what you were signing up for. Maybe you were glad that they lived in a different city because you hoped they wouldn't disturb your life. But if your husband isn't devoted to those kids when they are with him, it will have massive impact on them. On their mental health and on how they feel about themselves. So please, for those few weeks a year, let him be a good dad, and allow yourself to be in second place.

---

her 'bad' behaviour is just her trying to tell you something. Be curious about what that is. Her world has been turned upside down, and she doesn't understand it. Let her be angry.

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Horoscopes

By Jane Struthers **For the week 15-21 July**

LEO
24 July – 23 August

A current project that you're caught up in may need some revision from the 18th onwards. This is particularly true if you've already been wondering whether it's worth pursuing in its current form or whether you should tweak it in some way.

Theme of the week: Pause for thought

☎ 0906 650 7234

VIRGO
24 August – 23 September

Although friendly get-togethers have been on the agenda recently you don't feel quite so keen now. Maybe that's because you're looking for a deeper connection with someone at the start of the week. You tend to feel tongue-tied and reserved from the 18th.

Theme of the week: Breaking rules

☎ 0906 650 7235

LIBRA
24 September – 23 October

You're busy with work tasks early in the week because you want to use your time wisely and show what you're capable of achieving. Midweek it's so easy to fall for tempting distractions. A certain someone is ultra-charming on the 21st.

Theme of the week: Expeditions

☎ 0906 650 7236

SCORPIO
24 October – 22 November

Try to get any urgent tasks out of the way at the start of the week, because you certainly won't be in the mood from the 19th onwards. This will be a fabulous time for enjoying your social life, but on the 20th you're looking for deep connections.

Theme of the week: Magnetic attraction

☎ 0906 650 7237

SAGITTARIUS
23 November – 21 December

You're brimming with generous instincts early on, so keep a close eye on your spending otherwise you might have a big surprise. You like being with others on the 20th but you're easily bored, so you need to be with people who are lively and intelligent.

Theme of the week: Mental stimulation

☎ 0906 650 7238

CAPRICORN
22 December – 20 January

Right now you're doing your best to keep the peace. So how's it going? It could be a struggle on the 18th, when someone puts you on the defensive or hurts your feelings. The 20th is perfect for rolling up your sleeves and getting on with essential tasks.

Theme of the week: Know what's what

☎ 0906 650 7239

AQUARIUS
21 January – 19 February

Get ready for a few clashes this week. None of them will last long but they won't be much fun. This is a reminder to enjoy yourself whenever you can, and the 18th is certainly fabulous for being with some of your favourite people.

Theme of the week: Tact

☎ 0906 650 7240

Elizabeth McGovern – 64 on 18 July

CANCER
22 June – 23 July

You're reluctant to say too much this week because you don't want to risk revealing your vulnerable side, so you'll prefer to change the subject or clam up rather than say what you really think about things. Even so, the 20th is great for attending to practical matters or giving someone some sensible advice.

Theme of the week: Discretion

☎ 0906 650 7233

PISCES
20 February – 20 March

It's not the best week for stepping out of your comfort zone because right now you're craving faces and places that are reassuringly familiar. On the 19th you're aware of a long list of things to do, but do you need to get them all done at once?

Theme of the week: Domesticity

☎ 0906 650 7241

ARIES
21 March – 20 April

Almost everything you do this week carries more intensity than you imagine, especially if you long for nostalgically inspired comfort and emotional security. Be careful how you go about it on the 18th, when matters will backfire if you become too insistent.

Theme of the week: Drive

☎ 0906 650 7230

TAURUS
21 April – 21 May

You feel sociable and outgoing at the start of the week but you quickly switch to preferring your own company whenever possible. This solitary phase doesn't last long so you're soon ready to mix with some of the people you know best.

Theme of the week: Values

☎ 0906 650 7231

GEMINI
22 May – 21 June

Watch what you say and how you say it this week. You may think you're being clear but other people might not agree with you. This is especially likely from the 18th, but at least it gives you the chance to rethink some of your recent plans and ideas.

Theme of the week: Weigh your words

☎ 0906 650 7232

For a more detailed weekly forecast call the number for your star sign. Calls cost 65p per minute plus your network access charge. Weekly forecasts last approximately four minutes. Messages are pre-recorded. For entertainment and guidance purposes only. Users must be over 18. Service provider: Spoke. Customer service number 0333 202 3390 (9am-5pm).

All-inclusive esca

Whether you're looking for a romantic break or a family getaway, we have a holiday to suit everyone

Steigenberger Aqua Magic, Egypt

With sunshine all year round, Egypt is a great choice for a more affordable all-inclusive holiday. Steigenberger Aqua Magic Hotel is a five-star modern resort set on a private beach in Hurghada, overlooking the Red Sea.

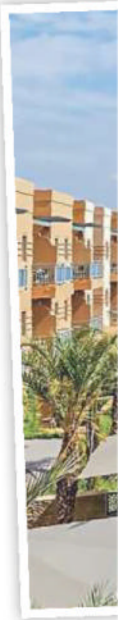
Nothing is too much trouble for the friendly staff and you'll be spoilt for choice with the seven pools, an adults-only rooftop pool and huge water park. The hotel also has its own golf course and spa. There are plenty of bars and restaurants to choose from where you can try delicious Egyptian food.

- **Seven nights' all-inclusive travelling from London Gatwick on 24 February 2026 costs £539pp. Visit loveholidays.com**

Granada Luxury Belek, Turkey

For the perfect blend of family-friendly hospitality and relaxation, stay at the Granada Luxury Belek in Turkey. While there are lots of regular hotel rooms and suites, one of the most popular types of accommodation at the resort is the Maldivian Houses. Specially designed to emulate the atmosphere of the Maldives, these overwater villas have glass floor panels, an outdoor terrace area and direct access to the pool. There is also an on-site waterpark with a whopping 15 slides, a lazy river for the less adventurous and wave pool, so the kids will be entertained for days!

- **Prices for a seven-night all-inclusive stay in at Granada Luxury Belek in November 2025 start at £619pp with flights from London Southend. Book at loveholidays.com**



Seaside Los Jameos, Lanzarote

Nestled in beautiful Canarian gardens and positioned on the edge of the lively Puerto del Carmen area, it's easy to see why guests keep returning to Seaside Los Jameos in Lanzarote. You'll be greeted with a chilled glass of Cava and this superb service doesn't stop for the duration of your stay.

Although there is only one main buffet-style restaurant, the food is outstanding, with live cooking stations offering made-to-order fish and meat dishes. Themes each night range from Asian to Canarian food, and Friday night's gala feast is a real showstopper.

- **Seven nights' all-inclusive at Seaside Los Jameos including return flights from Birmingham, departing on 28 November 2025, costs £870 per adult. To book, visit jet2holidays.com**

Stella Island Resort, Greece

With massive lagoon pools winding through the resort, Stella Island in Crete truly feels like it's floating on the water. The adults-only hotel has a range of accommodation styles including luxury pool-view rooms, overwater bungalows and island villas, all thoughtfully designed to be the ultimate relaxation retreat.

Foodies will love the five à la carte restaurants including an international buffet, steakhouse and local Greek cuisine. For a special experience, guests can enjoy a luxurious floating breakfast service where your meal will be brought to you in your private pool area – ideal for a romantic getaway.

- **A three-night all-inclusive stay in a luxury room with pool view starts at £560.50pp in October 2025. Book at stellaisland.gr**

Jaal Riad Resort, Marrakech

Nestled in the heart of Marrakech, Jaal Riad Resort is a lavish oasis that combines the charm of traditional Moroccan design with modern luxury. Set against the backdrop of the Atlas Mountains, you can take a dip in the pool while taking in the gorgeous landscape. Tuck into tasty Moroccan cuisine at Le Terraz, which is just one of the many dining options on-site.

If you fancy soaking up the atmosphere of Marrakech, the resort is located just 10 minutes from the action of the Medina and its many market stalls and shops. You'll be sure to find the perfect souvenir here!

- **A four-night all-inclusive stay at Jaal Riad Resort costs from £652pp with flights departing from London Stansted on 6 October 2025. Book at jet2holidays.com**

By Carly Honeyfield, **Pictures** Shutterstock

TV WEEK

Unforgivable

Thursday 24 July, BBC2

Award-winning writer Jimmy McGovern's new series will start conversations as the hard-hitting drama explores the impact of grooming and sexual abuse on one family. Joe (Bobby Schofield) leaves prison to stay in a rehabilitation institution and embarks on therapy sessions with Katherine (Anna Maxwell Martin), an ex-nun, to help him understand why he committed the abuse. Meanwhile his sister, Anna (Anna Friel), is dealing with the aftermath of Joe's crime on her sons, Tom (Austin Haynes) and Peter (Fin McParland), and her father Brian (David Threlfall). As we see the ripple effect of abuse from multiple perspectives, how will everyone attempt to move forward?

HERE WE GO

Friday 25 July, BBC1

We are parachuting back into the chaotic lives of the Jessop family and there is a lot for them to navigate. Mum Rachel (Katherine Parkinson) is starting her new life as a therapist and dad Paul (Jim Howick) is still trying to find respect at work now he's a police constable. Grandmother Sue (Alison Steadman) has moved back in and there are new beginnings for Uncle Robin (Tom Basden) and wife Cherry (Tori Allen-Martin) who are busy with baby Atlas. And we get to holiday with the Jessops to Malta which, unsurprisingly, isn't a particularly relaxing break!

By Caroline Blight, Amber Connolly and Amy Rowland

Karen Pirie

Sunday 20 July, ITV1

Lauren Lyle returns as police detective Karen Pirie and having solved the 1996 disappearance of a barmaid in season one, she now has an even bigger cold case to crack. She is assigned to the 1984 disappearance of oil magnate's daughter Catriona Grant (Julia Brown), which is reopened after fresh evidence emerges. 'Karen's been promoted from Detective Sergeant to Detective Inspector so she has a lot more power in this new series,' Lauren says. 'Everything about the new season feels more epic – there are more characters, more explosions, just more of everything. Plus it's darker but also funnier.'

TV timings are subject to change

Tom Kerridge Cooks Spain

Thursday 24 July, ITV1

After taking us around the UK cooking up a storm in his customised van last summer, this time Michelin starred chef Tom Kerridge is on the road in Spain travelling across its diverse regions to find the best produce and dishes. He's meeting local farmers and growers to find out more about how to perfect the Spanish delights that are famous around the world and discover some less well-known recipes too. Tom is taking in the history, culture and people behind the food. Expect some truly authentic flavours as he immerses himself in local traditions and cooking with regional ingredients.

WHITSTABLE PEARL

Friday 25 July, Drama&U

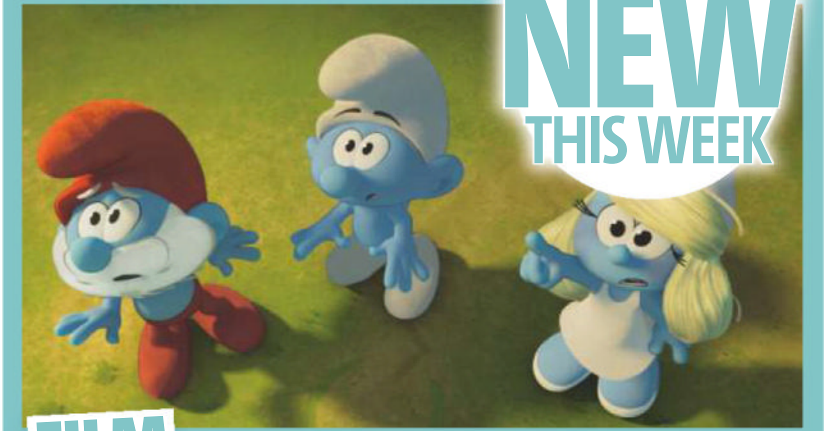
Life by the sea is proving as eventful as ever for Pearl (Kerry Godliman) in the third series of this charming detective series. Her private investigating business is booming and Pearl has handed more responsibility for the restaurant over to her mum Dolly (Frances Barber) and young employee Ruby (Isobelle Molloy). Pearl's love life seems to be on an even keel as Tom (Robert Webb) is clearly besotted with her. But will he feel threatened when Mike (Howard Charles) returns? We will find out soon as Pearl and Mike have a mysterious missing person sighting to work on.

MANDY

Monday 21 July, BBC2

Mandy (Diane Morgan) is still struggling to find gainful employment despite enrolling in a wide range of jobs – and some dodgy side hustles. Her benefits officer (Tom Basden) is upping the pressure with his new compulsory workshops but as always Mandy has her supportive friend Lola (Michelle Greenidge) who has kind words to help soften the many blows. 'I suppose it's always nice, after a hard day's work, to see someone have a worse time than you and still come through without serious mental health issues or HR getting involved,' says Diane. And there are famous faces galore popping up in series four.

NEW THIS WEEK



FILM

Smurfs

Everybody's favourite small, blue characters are back for a new adventure! In this latest reboot, disaster strikes when Papa Smurf is mysteriously taken by evil wizards. In an attempt to save him, Smurfette leads the Smurfs on a mission into the real world. Featuring new music from a variety of artists, including an original song by Rihanna – who also voices Smurfette and produces the film – it's all-round family fun.

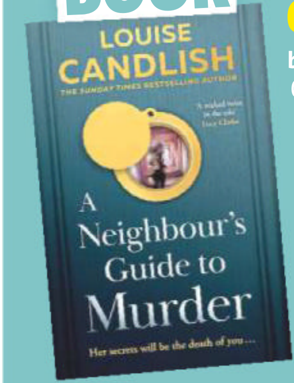
EVENT

Elvis Evolution

This immersive experience is the first of its kind, celebrating the life and work of the king of rock 'n' roll. With cutting-edge technology, themed bars and live actors and musicians, it's a multi-sensory journey through Elvis's rags to riches story. Head to Immerse LDN at London Excel Waterfront to walk in the shoes of an icon. Tickets available at elvisevolution.com

BOOK

A Neighbour's Guide to Murder


LOUISE CANDLISH
THE SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
A Neighbour's Guide to Murder
Her secrets will be the death of you...

by Louise Candlish (HQ)

Gwen is queen bee at Columbia Mansions, a much-sought after London apartment block. A member of the management board, there isn't much she doesn't know about the comings and goings. When neighbour Alec takes in lodger Pixie, Gwen strikes up a friendship with her. But when things aren't all as they seem with Alec and his young flatmate, her maternal instincts kick in and soon, events are spiralling out of control... Fantastic – we drop everything for a Louise Candlish novel.

BOOK

The Wedding Forecast

The Wedding Forecast
Destiny doesn't always go to plan
NINA KENWOOD

by Nina Kenwood (ARIA)

Anna is the bridesmaid at her best friend's wedding. Her ex, Joel, is a groomsman – and he's bringing his new girlfriend as his plus one. Anna needs a distraction, and Patrick, the wedding photographer, seems like the ideal solution but then Mac, a not-quite-famous actor who has flown in from New York, arrives and Anna must accept that when it comes to love, destiny doesn't always follow the rules. We loved this feel-good read.

Keeley says she was drawn to the script instantly

‘It’s about misunders

She enjoyed filming with on-screen son Freddie

From the award-winning creators of *The Missing*, Harry and Jack Williams, comes *The Assassin*, an explosive new series with an edge-of-your-seat premise. The show follows Julie (Keeley Hawes), a retired assassin, whose quiet life on a Greek island is shattered when her estranged son Edward (Freddie Highmore) arrives looking for answers about his mysterious past. When danger follows them across Europe, mother and son find themselves on the run from crooks, killers, as well as their own dark secrets. Here, Keeley, 49, tells us more…

What drew you to this project?

I just love Jack and Harry’s writing! I worked with them about 10 years ago on the second series of *The Missing*, and it’s extraordinary to see the journey their imaginations take us on. This is so different again. Every genre they touch feels true, and the dialogue is always brilliant, it is witty one moment, moving the next. As actors, you know you’re in good hands. It’s quite a gift, getting handed scripts that have you laughing, crying, and ducking for cover!

The series boasts a phenomenal cast, but we have to ask, what was it like working with Freddie Highmore as your on-screen son Edward?

I enjoyed every second of working with Freddie. We met over Zoom

the messiness and tandings of family'

Crystal-clear waters create the perfect backdrop

Keeley Hawes stars in a new high-stakes action thriller set in stunning Greece

and hit it off straight away and honestly, we're very similar, we've got the same sense of humour and interests. That chemistry just happens sometimes, and it feels effortless, which is a joy, especially in scenes that are emotional or tense.

This is a high-octane action series. Was it daunting to take on such a stunt-heavy role?
Oh, this is definitely some of the biggest stunt work I've ever done! I do love a challenge, and parts of this were challenging in the best way. For example, there's a big chase scene we shot in Plaka, a beautiful old neighbourhood in Athens, where I'm on a motorbike with Freddie on the back and we're being chased. It was all done on this contraption with the bike attached, and it was brilliant fun. Plus, the action is always balanced with great dialogue and a bit of humour, so it never feels too heavy.

You've played tough, complex women before in *Bodyguard* and *Line of Duty*. What makes Julie in *The Assassin* different?
Julie is very different. She's built this ability to compartmentalise everything, including her feelings, her past, and her work as an assassin. It made her successful, but it's cost her so much personally, especially with Edward. Now she's forced to confront it all, the secrecy, the distance, the regrets. She's vulnerable, and that's what I found so interesting. She has to ask for help, rely on her son, and that's terrifying for her.

Greece features so prominently in the opening, what was it like being back there, and does it bring something special to the show?
It was so lovely being back in Greece! I did four series of *The Durrells* in Corfu, and a lot of the crew for *The Assassin* actually came from Athens, so it was like a reunion. When you walk onto a set and see so many familiar faces, it calms the nerves immediately. Athens and the Greek islands double so wonderfully for all our locations in Spain, France, even Albania. The light, the colours, the feeling, it's all so cinematic.

At its core, the show is a mother-son relationship under extreme pressure. Was that aspect important to you?
Absolutely. On paper, it's an action-packed thriller, but really it's about family and the messiness and the misunderstandings of that. It's about how hard it is to admit when you've kept secrets from the people you love. Julie and Edward's relationship is the heartbeat of the series, and that's what gives it real stakes beyond the gunfights and the jet-setting.

There's plenty of action and suspense in this new thriller

Any scene or moment you're especially excited for viewers to see?
That's hard! There's a sequence in Athens with the motorcycle chase I mentioned and I've never done anything like it. But truthfully, I'm excited for viewers to see the emotional moments between Julie and Edward. Those scenes, when stunt work pauses and it's just the two of them, are so special.

Why should *Bella* readers tune in?
Because there's nothing quite like it on TV right now. It's got high-stakes drama, action, and a real emotional core – which is what keeps you watching, I hope! Brilliant writing, an incredible cast, and it's all set in these stunning locations. I feel incredibly lucky to be part of it, and I think viewers will really enjoy the ride.

● *The Assassin, Friday 25 July, Prime Video*

By Cecile Metcalf, **Pictures** Prime Video, Shutterstock

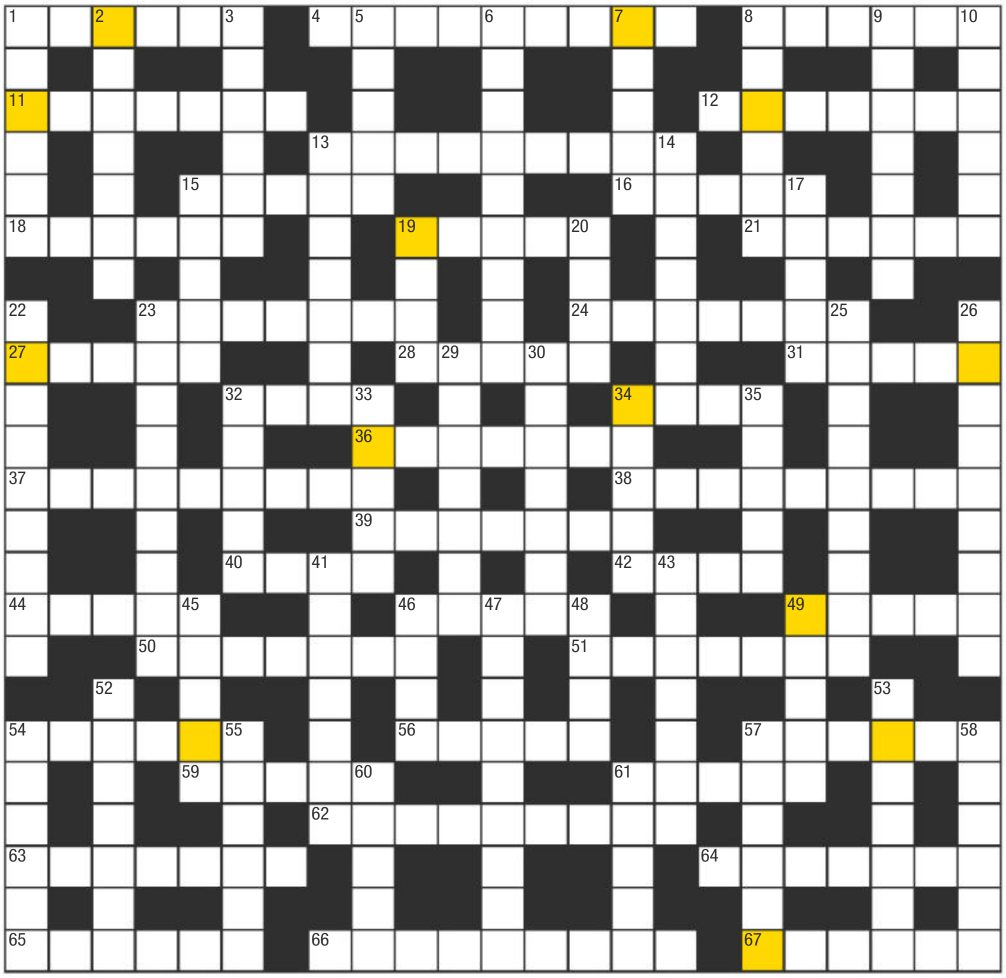
Puzzles

YOU could be in with a chance of winning £200

PRIZE crossword

WIN £200

Solve the crossword to find, reading from top to bottom in the shaded squares, the name of a British actor. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel, below right.



Across

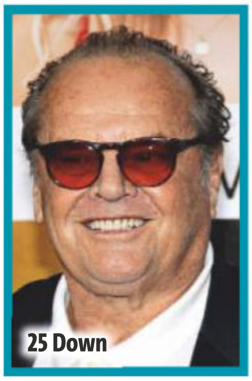
1 - - - chloride, salt (6)
4 Capital of the Netherlands (9)
8 Rule keeping people indoors between certain times (6)
11 Bridge over a valley (7)
12 Lap of a racetrack (7)
13 Works canteen (9)
15 Former Wimbledon champ, - - - Ivanišević (5)
16 Restrict (5)
18 *Doc Martin* and *Cranford* actress, - - - Atkins (6)

40 Across

19 Variety of wheat used to make pasta (5)
21 Bite-sized hors d'oeuvre served with drinks at a formal party (6)
23 Quandary (7)
24 Theatre drape (7)
27 Former Tory leader, William - - - (5)
28 Fracas (5)
31 Variety of Spanish wine (5)
32 Light - - - moment, sudden inspiration (4)
34 Put your feet up! (4)
36 Letter – in the New Testament? (7)
37 Hospital vehicle (9)
38 Pet hate, anagram of ORIENT BEE (4,5)
39 Action film with Harrison Ford, *Indiana Jones And The Last* - - - (7)
40 - - - Jackman, star of *Deadpool & Wolverine* and *The Greatest Showman*, pictured below left (4)
42 Cooking fat (4)
44 Goes on horseback (5)
46 Samuel - - -, English diarist (5)
49 Louisa May Alcott novel about the March family, *Little* - - - (5)
50 Jazz style (7)
51 Waxy substance found in sheep's wool (7)
54 Fearne - - -, TV and radio presenter (6)
56 Chain (of mountains) (5)
57 Vinyl single or album (6)
59 In your glad rags, dressed up to the - - - (5)
61 Book of maps (5)
62 Prince and the Revolution song, - - - *Beret* (9)
63 Martin Scorsese biopic about Howard Hughes, *The* - - - (7)
64 Reach (your aims) (7)
65 Cheek indentation (6)
66 Prize-winning athlete? (9)
67 US soap opera featuring the characters JR Ewing and Cliff Barnes (6)

Down

1 Harsh – weather conditions? (6)
2 Vampire novel by Bram Stoker (7)
3 Emmanuel - - -, President of France (6)
5 Karen in *Will & Grace*, - - - Mullally (5)
6 Magazine or newspaper content that's not advertising, anagram of IDEAL TRIO (9)
7 Blacksmith's block (5)
8 Film or theatre reviewer, eg (6)
9 Social blunder (4,3)
10 Traditional building method, - - - and daub (6)
13 Gooey chocolate filling (7)
14 Grand National racecourse (7)
15 Christina Aguilera hit, - - - *In A Bottle* (5)
17 South American mammal with an elongated snout (5)
19 Tot (of whisky) (4)
20 Ceremonial staff, or a spice (4)
22 David Bowie song from 1983 (5,4)
23 *Jamaica Inn* author, Daphne - - - (2,7)
25 Jack - - -, film icon, pictured right (9)
26 *Swan Lake* dancer? (9)
29 Gourmet (7)
30 Wide river mouth (7)
32 - - - volleyball, sandy sport (5)
33 Variety of tree (5)
34 Aussie star of *Bride Hard*, - - - Wilson (5)
35 Fashion fad (5)
41 Faint gleam – of hope? (7)
43 Official pardon (7)
45 Beauty parlour (5)
46 Social equal (4)
47 Military combat simulation game with dye-filled capsules (9)
48 Blackthorn fruit (4)
49 Artful tricks (5)
52 Arena (7)
53 *Casino Royale* theme singer, Chris - - - (7)
54 Person lacking courage (6)
55 *Babygirl* actress, - - - Kidman (6)
57 Highly unpleasant, repugnant (6)
58 Coerced, under - - - (6)
60 Fry lightly in oil (5)
61 Zodiac sign of the Ram (5)



25 Down

COMPETITION AND GIVEAWAY RULES Competitions open to residents of the UK (including Channel Islands and the Isle of Man), Eire or BFPOs, aged 18 or over, except Bauer Media employees, its affiliated companies, any promotional partners, or their families and anyone connected with the competitions. Enter by text, online or phone. No purchase necessary. Answers must be the product of own work. Unless expressly stated, travel expenses and spending money is not included. There is no cash alternative to prizes and no alternative holidays can be offered. Prizes are not transferable. No responsibility can be accepted for entries that are delayed, damaged, mislaid or wrongly delivered, or for any loss in service of the online entry mechanism or for entries lost, delayed or corrupted due to computer error in transit. Only one entry per person. A winning entry is the first correct answer drawn after the closing date. For a free entry, enter online at bellamagazine.co.uk. Prizewinners will be notified by post on headed paper or by official email. The results are published. Winners must agree to the publication of their names, age and photos. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence can be entered into. Your information will only be used to administer promotions in accordance with our privacy policy. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. Promoter: H Bauer Publishing. Full T&Cs can be found at bauerlegal.co.uk/competition-terms.html

Crossword Neil Locker. **Pictures** Shutterstock

Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row, each column and each smaller 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

EASY

5		8	2		4	6		1
9		6				3		2
3			7		2			8
		4		6		7		
2			8		5			4
6		5				4		3
1		2	3		7	5		6

HARD

	8				1			4
				4	3			
	3	6		9				
5		3	9					6
		8				3		
7					2	8		9
				5		9	7	
			3	1				
6			4				5	

***Take A Break Sudoku* magazine, containing over 80 fun-to-solve puzzles, is on sale now.**

PRIZE Arrowword

WIN £200

Solve the clues, writing your answers in the directions shown by the arrows, to reveal, reading down the shaded squares, the name of the organisation for which David Beckham has spent 20 years as a Goodwill Ambassador. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel below.

BBC news host, --- Munchetty	▼	Jenson ---, racing driver	As well, too	▼	Malicious remark	Singer, --- Sandé	▼	Thomas ---, inventor	▼	First batsman	Summer shoes	Snail track?	▼	(Of wine) Dry
Embarrassed	▶	▼	▼			▼		Wallpaper glue	▶		▼	▼		Enrique Iglesias ballad
Swallow hard	▶	🟨			1760 yards	▶				Curved structure	▶			▼
▶								--- Conti, ventriloquist	▶		🟨		Tom Hanks film, *A Man Called ---*	
Glass road reflectors	Rocky hill	▶			Fleshy ear part	▶				French fashion house	▶		▼	
Artist, --- Matisse	Encourages (4,2)		Front of the lower leg	▶				Bridge in Venice	▶					
▶	▼			🟨						Royal racecourse?		Actress, --- Blanchett		Division of a school year
Another time		The Beeb?	Ancient Peruvian							▶		🟨 ▼		▼
▶		▼	▼							Not right now… in a while	Nimble		Goes wrong	
Source of solar power	▶			Era, age						▶	▼		▼	
On a single occasion	▶			▼						Bacterium	▶			
▶										Upwards, into the air		Group off Cornwall, Scilly ---		Hot ---, whisky nightcap
Readily available (2,3)	Adele hit, *Set Fire To The ---*		Shoo!		Warrant, deserve	▼	Follow on from	Possesses	Top celebs? (1-4)	▶ ▼		▼		▼
▶	▼	🟨	▼		▼			▼	Musical, --- *Misérables*	▶			Electric fish?	
Gradual increase in volume		--- & Dave, pub rock duo	▶				Court, romance	▶			Guided from the front	▶	▼	
▶				Spoil	▶				Liberated	🟨 ▶				
Cocktail, --- colada		Melody	▶				Took to a chair	▶			Devious, crafty	▶		

David Beckham

SOLUTIONS

Sudoku solutions can be found online now at bellamagazine.co.uk

ISSUE 26
PRIZE ANSWERS
Crossword
Bruno Mars
Arrowword
August

Full solutions to this week's prize puzzles can be found at bellamagazine.co.uk after the closing date: 28 July 2025

HOW TO ENTER THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS

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When asked for the issue number, key in 28. Calls cost 50p per call, plus your network access charge. (UK readers only.) You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission.

BY TEXT: 65115

Text BEL28 then a space followed by your name, house number or name, your postcode, then your answer(s), all separated by a space, to 65115, eg Jane Smith 10 SL5 9JN Answer(s). Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Keep texts under 160 characters or you may be charged for more than one text.

● If you enter after the closing date, you will not be entered but may be charged. Not available in Eire. Please ensure your entry is completed correctly, as incorrect entries may be charged but not entered. This is not a subscription service.

● **You are automatically consenting to receive further communications about these competitions from us via SMS text. You can opt out of this at any time by texting STOP to 65115.** This will be charged at your standard network rate, but you will need to do this each time you enter the competition by text. Your personal data will (regardless of whether you opt out) always be used to process your entry. For further information, see general terms and privacy policy at Bauerdatapromise.co.uk.

● Lines close at 11.59pm on **28 July 2025**.

Phone UK SP: Spoke (0333 202 3390). Text SP: Bauer Media. Email smshelp@bauermedia.co.uk or call 0330 159 2525.

OR ENTER ONLINE:

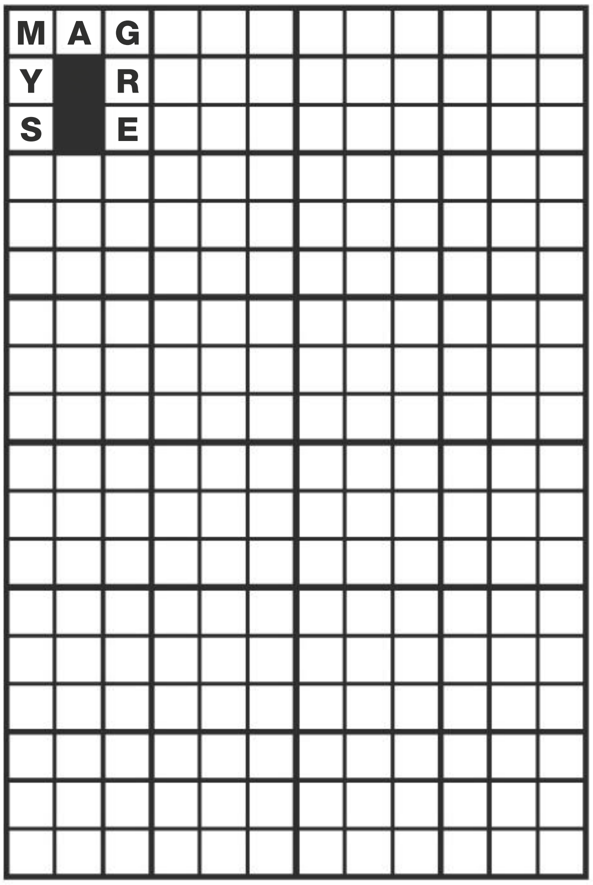
Bellamagazine.co.uk

Bella
Bella
Welcome to Bella Magazine
WIN
£25
£25

Continued over the page...

BITS & PIECES

We've taken a completed crossword puzzle and cut it up to give 24 pieces. Your task is to rebuild the puzzle with the help of the piece that we've already placed in the grid.



Y	■	C
■	S	H
■	A	■

A	■	F
T	■	L
E	R	Y

■	■	D
E	E	R
M	■	A

■	I	■
E	R	■
■	E	V

T	■	G
U	R	N
S	■	A

■	T	■
A	Y	■
L	■	P

A	P	P
■	P	■
■	H	E

I	■	E
S	T	R
M	■	■

M	■	I
P	O	S
O	■	T

O	■	A
P	A	R
C	■	D

~~M~~	~~A~~	~~G~~
~~Y~~	■	~~R~~
~~S~~	■	~~E~~

R	A	■
■	C	■
S	I	N

O	■	■
C	O	M
K	■	■

■	■	S
G	H	T
■	■	A

Q	U	I
U	■	T
E	■	■

K	I	N
■	■	T
S	E	■

I	O	R
B	■	A
I	N	G

I	C	■
■	A	I
■	P	■

■	P	R
S	■	■
T	R	Y

■	■	M
T	■	A
E	B	T

I	N	G
G	■	O
R	O	N

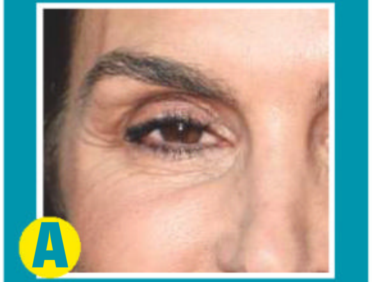
F	■	L
R	T	I
E	■	M

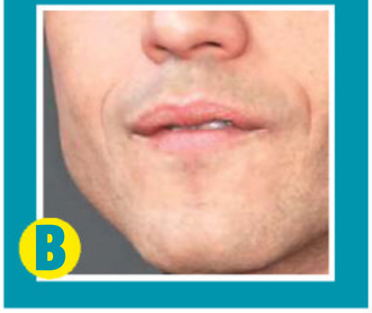
T	I	A
I	■	S
C	U	I

N	A	P
T	■	E
L	E	A

GUESS THE CELEB

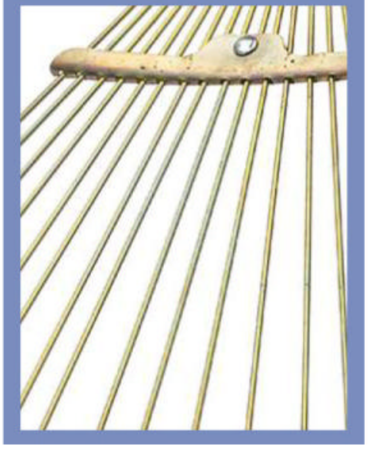
Can you name these stars by seeing close ups of their famous faces?





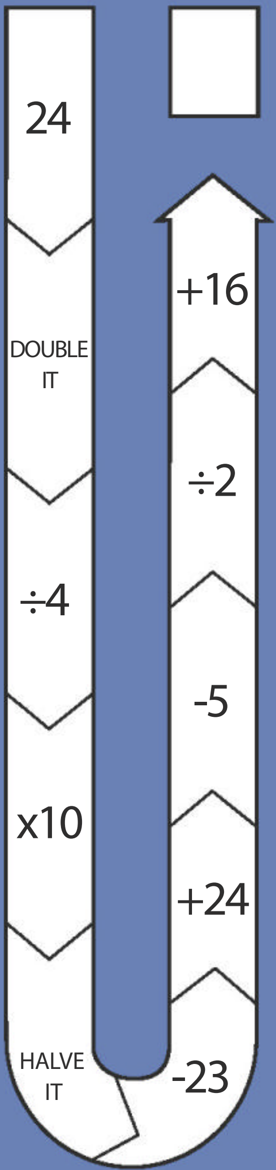
WHAT ON EARTH?

Can you guess what everyday object this super zoomed in photo shows?



ROUND SUM

Work out the solution to the sum by following the instructions contained within the arrow.



CODEBREAKER

When you've solved this codebreaker, the identity of our disguised celebrity will be revealed in the shaded squares. Then, the same code will help you complete the lower grid and read a mystery fact about them.

■	11	■	1 W	■	16	7	5	■	16	■	4	■	24	■
13	14	23	2 I	24	4	■	14	9	14	5	7	24	2	11
■	18	■	3 G	■	21	■	8	■	18	■	10	■	8	■
19	7	1	■	20	21	22	22	26	7	16	■	20	2	17
■	24	■	2	■	13	■	26	■	21	■	1	■	9	■
25	22	15	15	4						16	14	9	3	7
7	■	■	22	■						■	19	■	■	1
6	8	2	16	25						15	22	9	7	9
2	■	■	2	■						■	21	■	■	22
15	22	9	6	22						8	22	4	22	26
■	24	■	22	■	12	■	22	■	12	■	26	■	17	■
23	2	25	■	20	10	21	2	7	10	6	■	16	7	1
■	11	■	14	■	14	■	3	■	22	■	14	■	26	■
20	2	22	9	26	2	6	13	■	22	3	3	11	10	25
■	15	■	4	■	24	■	15	7	9	■	7	■	6	■

ABCDEF~~G~~H~~I~~J
KLMNOPQRS
TUV~~W~~XYZ

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
W	I	G										
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

13	22	21	■	16	7	15	13	22	21	■	5	14	9	9	22	26	■	14	24	24
			■							■							■			

16	2	21	21	7	21	6	■	2	9	■	15	13	22	■	13	7	10	6	22
							■			■				■					

Pictures Shutterstock

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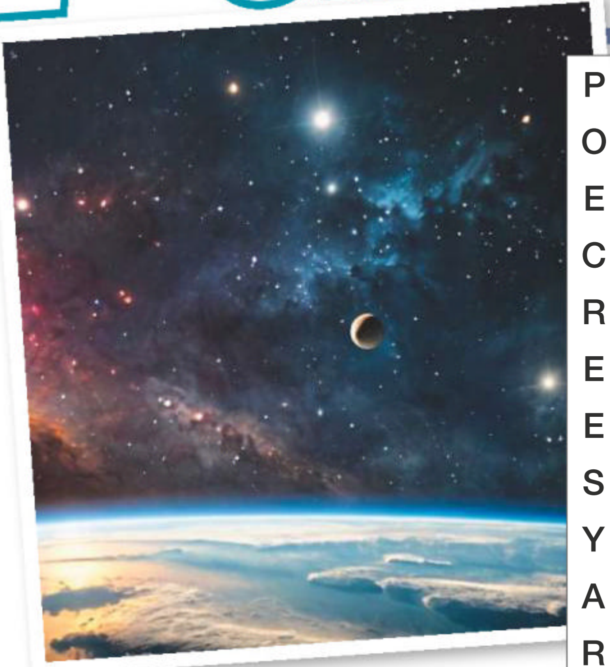

STAR QUALITY

Find your milky way through to the end of this space exploration-themed search – it's out of this world!

P	I	O	N	E	E	R	N	R	U	E	L	O	H	K	C	A	L	B
O	E	L	I	L	A	G	A	E	L	X	M	J	I	P	E	B	A	E
E	R	E	H	P	S	O	M	T	A	A	D	E	M	O	R	D	N	A
C	Z	B	A	H	Y	Q	T	T	S	N	E	E	V	O	F	U	D	I
R	T	S	I	D	C	U	O	A	N	Y	I	U	S	W	T	T	I	R
E	K	S	D	T	H	T	A	M	O	V	R	M	E	P	P	R	N	O
E	L	H	A	S	T	G	D	K	I	L	A	A	E	O	I	I	G	S
S	U	R	V	E	Y	O	R	R	S	C	B	N	N	E	A	L	T	U
Y	E	N	O	L	L	O	P	A	L	P	I	A	G	I	L	S	C	F
A	L	I	N	S	P	E	R	D	U	L	M	O	A	U	B	N	C	E
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U	I	H	E	S	M	D	S	R	O	A	M	E	R	C	U	R	Y	O
T	R	N	P	T	A	A	P	A	R	L	G	R	N	I	E	A	D	D
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L	M	A	S	N	I	G	R	I	A	R	I	V	I	C	S	I	C	R
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ANDROMEDA
APOLLO
ASTEROID
ASTRONAUT
ATLANTIS
ATMOSPHERE
BINARY STAR
BLACK HOLE
COSMIC RAYS
COUNTDOWN
DARK MATTER
ECLIPSE
EXPLORER

GALILEO
JUPITER
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LIGHT YEAR
MARINER
MERCURY
NEPTUNE
ORBIT
PHOBOS
PIONEER
PROPULSION
PROSPERO

PULSAR
RADIATION
REDSHIFT
ROCKET

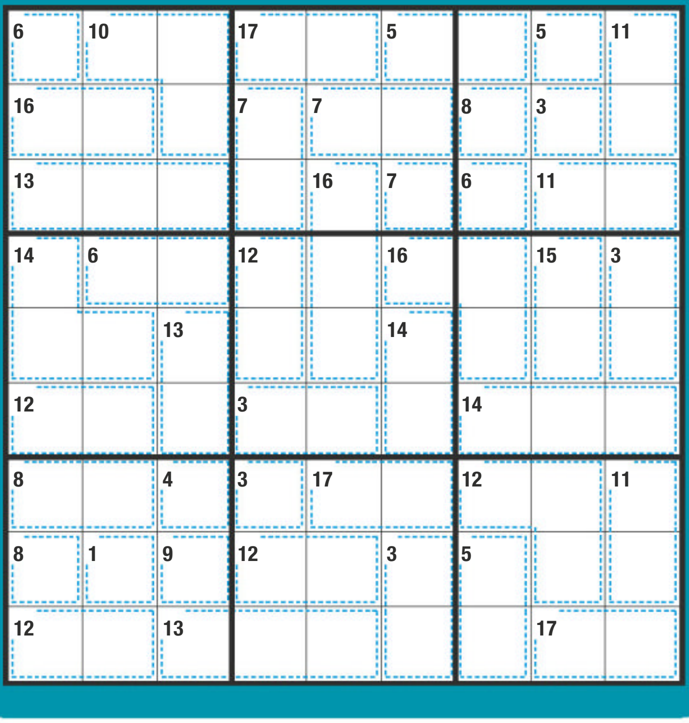
SHUTTLE
SIRIUS A
SPUTNIK
SUPERNOVA

SURVEYOR
UNIVERSE
VANGUARD
VOSTOK

ued...

KILLER SUDOKU

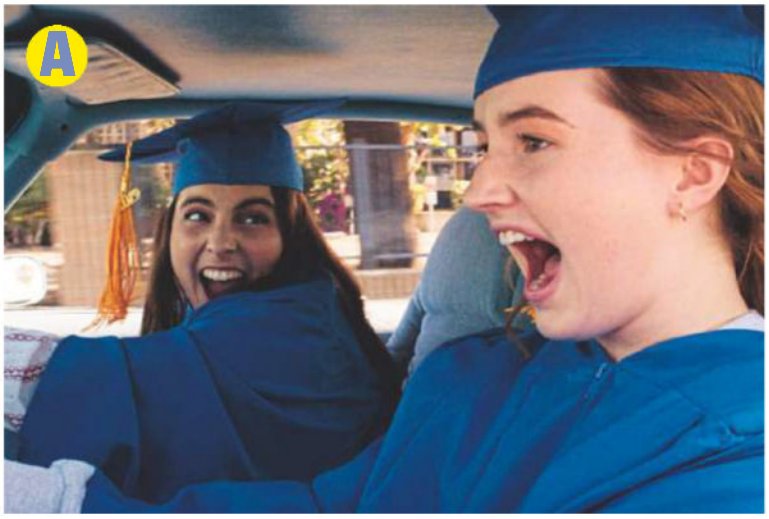
Killer Sudoku is based on the traditional sudoku grid and every column, every row and every 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 to 9. But there's a twist – the dotted squares must be filled with numbers that add up to that in the left corner.

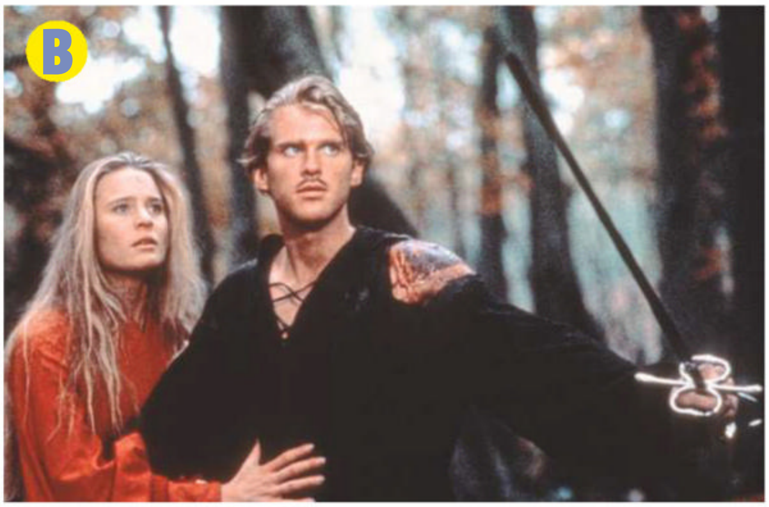


6	10		17		5		5	11
16			7	7		8	3	
13				16	7	6	11	
14	6		12		16		15	3
		13			14			
12			3			14		
8		4	3	17		12		11
8	1	9	12		3	5		
12		13					17	

GUESS THE MOVIE

Can you name these famous films from looking at just one scene?





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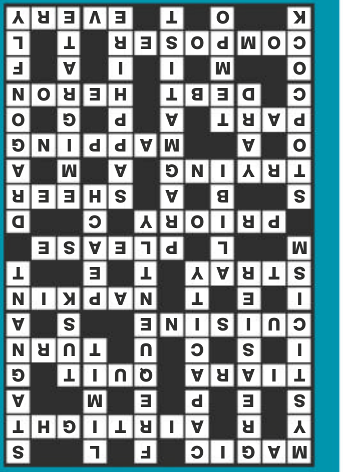
THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

BITS & PIECES



M	A	G	I	C		F		L			S
Y		R		A	I	R	T	I	G	H	T
S		E		P		E		M			A
T	I	A	R	A		Q	U	I	T		G
I		S		C		U		T	U	R	N
C	U	I	S	I	N	E			S		A
I		E		T		N	A	P	K	I	N
S	T	R	A	Y		T		E			T
M			L		P	L	E	A	S	E	
	P	R	I	O	R	Y		C			D
S			B		A		S	H	E	E	R
T	R	Y	I	N	G		A		M		A
O		A			M	A	P	P	I	N	G
P	A	R	T		A		P		G		O
C		D	E	B	T		H	E	R	O	N
O			M		I		I		A		F
C	O	M	P	O	S	E	R		T		L
K			O		T		E	V	E	R	Y

GUESS THE CELEB

A Cindy Crawford
B Rami Malek

WHAT ON EARTH?

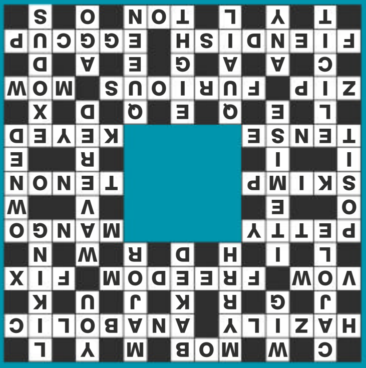
Rake

ROUND SUM

44

CODEBREAKER

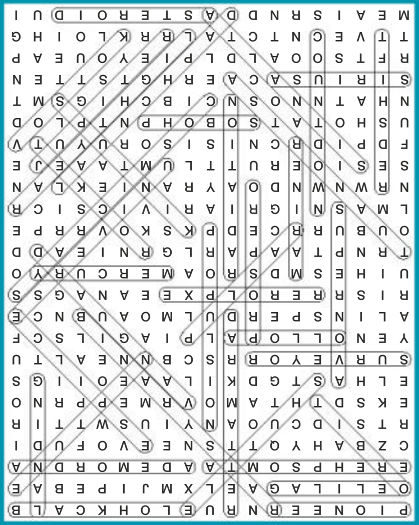
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
W	I	G	Y	B	S	O	K	N	U	C	Q	H
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
A	T	M	X	J	V	F	R	E	Z	L	P	D



	C		W		M	O	B		M		Y		L	
H	A	Z	I	L	Y		A	N	A	B	O	L	I	C
	J		G		R		K		J		U		K	
V	O	W		F	R	E	E	D	O	M		F	I	X
	L		I		H		D		R		W		N	
P	E	T	T	Y						M	A	N	G	O
O			E								V			W
S	K	I	M	P						T	E	N	O	N
I			I								R			E
T	E	N	S	E						K	E	Y	E	D
	L		E		Q		E		Q		D		X	
Z	I	P		F	U	R	I	O	U	S		M	O	W
	C		A		A		G		E		A		D	
F	I	E	N	D	I	S	H		E	G	G	C	U	P
	T		Y		L		T	O	N		O		S	

Celebrity Claudia Winkleman **Fact** Her mother banned all mirrors in the house.

WORDSEARCH



P I O N E E R N R U E L O H K C A L B
O E L I L A G A E L X M J I P E B A E
E R E H P S O M T A A D E M O R D N A
C Z B A H Y Q T T S N E E V O F U D I
R T S I D C U O A N Y I U S W T T I R
E K S D T H T A M O V R M E P P R N O
E L H A S T G D K I L A A E O I I G S
S U R V E Y O R R S C B N N E A L T U
Y E N O L L O P A L P I A G I L S C F
A L I N S P E R D U L M O A U B N C E
R I S R R E R O L P X E E A N A G S S
U I H E S M D S R O A M E R C U R Y O
T R N P T A A P A R L G R N I E A D D
O U B U R R C E D P K S K O V R R P E
L M A S N I G R I A R I V I C S I C R
N R W N W N D O A Y R A N I E K L A N
S E S I O E R U T T L U M T A A E J E
F D P I D R C N I S I S O R U Y U T V
U S H O T A T S O B O H P N T P L O D
N H A T N N O S N C I B C H I G S M T
S I R I U S A C A E R H G T S T T E N
R F T S O O A L D L P I E Y O U E A P
T T V E C N T C T A L R R K L O I H G
M E A I S R N D D A S T E R O I D U I

KILLER SUDOKU

6	3	2	9	8	4	1	5	7
7	9	5	2	1	6	8	3	4
1	4	8	5	3	7	6	2	9
9	5	1	8	6	3	4	7	2
3	2	6	4	7	5	9	8	1
4	8	7	1	2	9	5	6	3
2	6	4	3	9	8	7	1	5
8	1	9	7	5	2	3	4	6
5	7	3	6	4	1	2	9	8

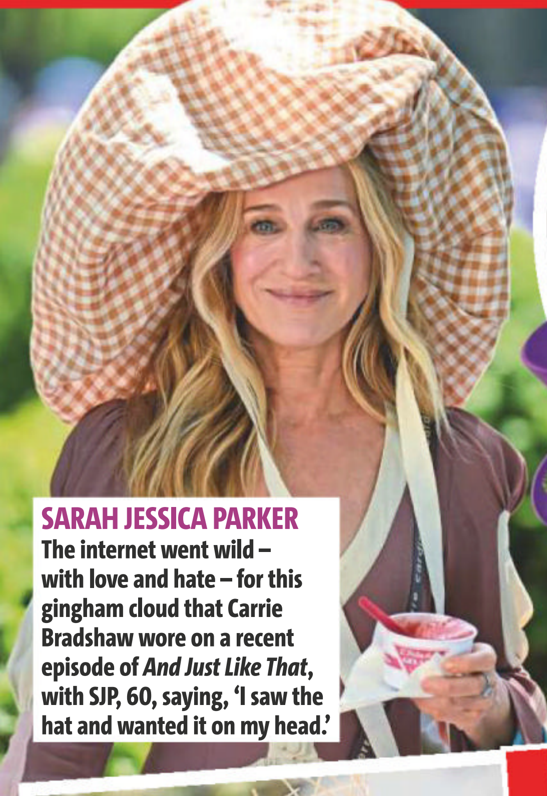
GUESS THE MOVIE

A Booksmart
B The Princess Bride

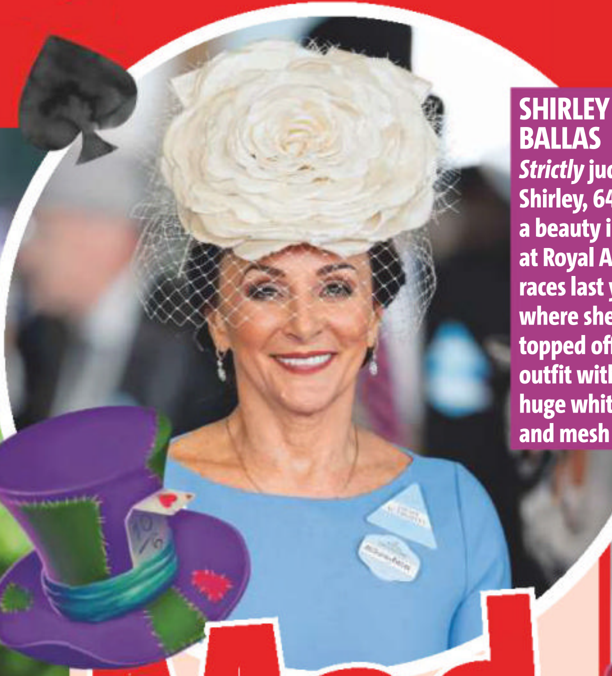
*NB for Prize Puzzles information, see page 53

Mad Hatters

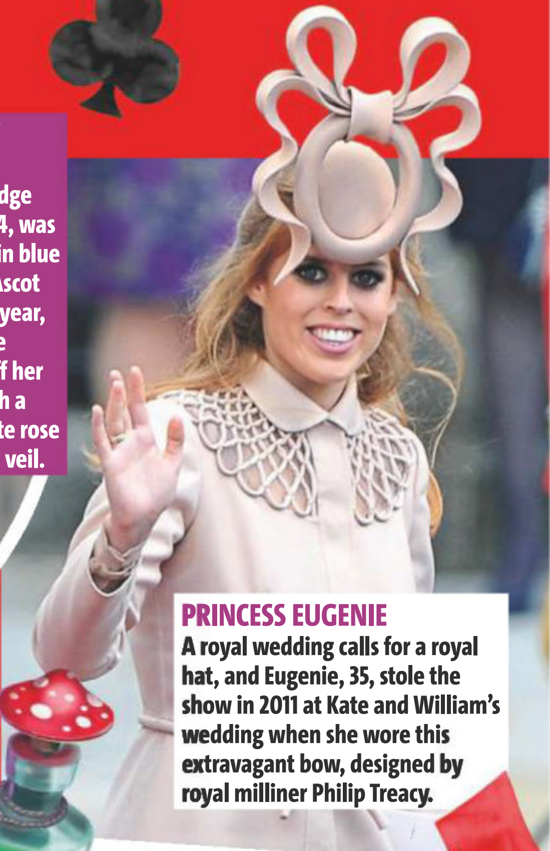
These celebs like to go big and bold with their headwear



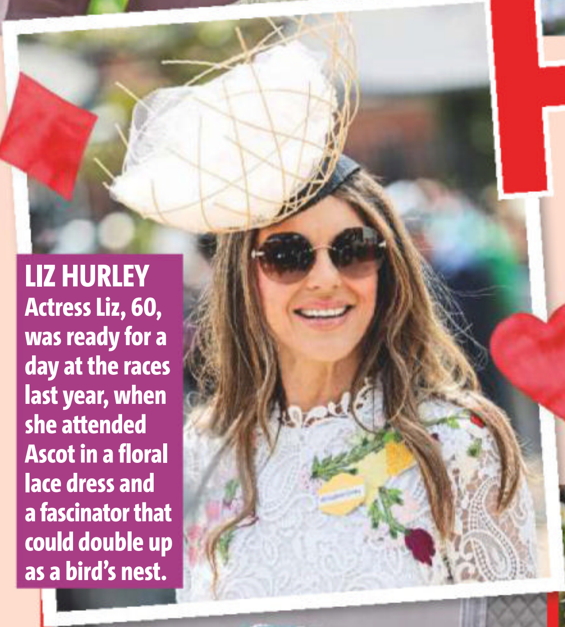
SARAH JESSICA PARKER
The internet went wild – with love and hate – for this gingham cloud that Carrie Bradshaw wore on a recent episode of *And Just Like That*, with SJP, 60, saying, 'I saw the hat and wanted it on my head.'



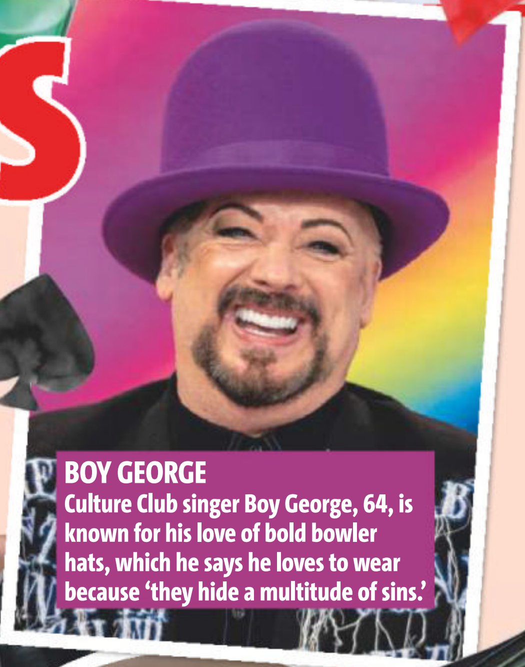
SHIRLEY BALLAS
Strictly judge Shirley, 64, was a beauty in blue at Royal Ascot races last year, where she topped off her outfit with a huge white rose and mesh veil.



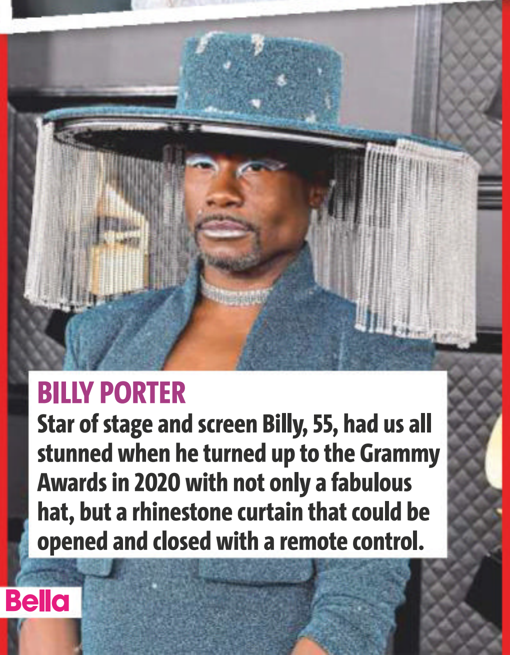
PRINCESS EUGENIE
A royal wedding calls for a royal hat, and Eugenie, 35, stole the show in 2011 at Kate and William's wedding when she wore this extravagant bow, designed by royal milliner Philip Treacy.



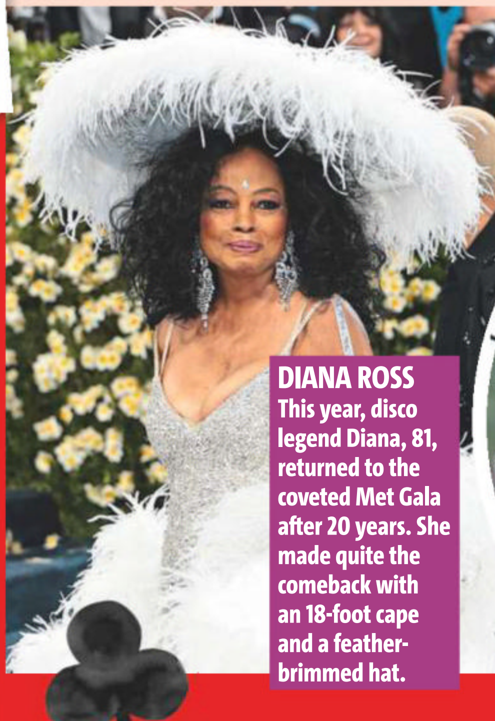
LIZ HURLEY
Actress Liz, 60, was ready for a day at the races last year, when she attended Ascot in a floral lace dress and a fascinator that could double up as a bird's nest.



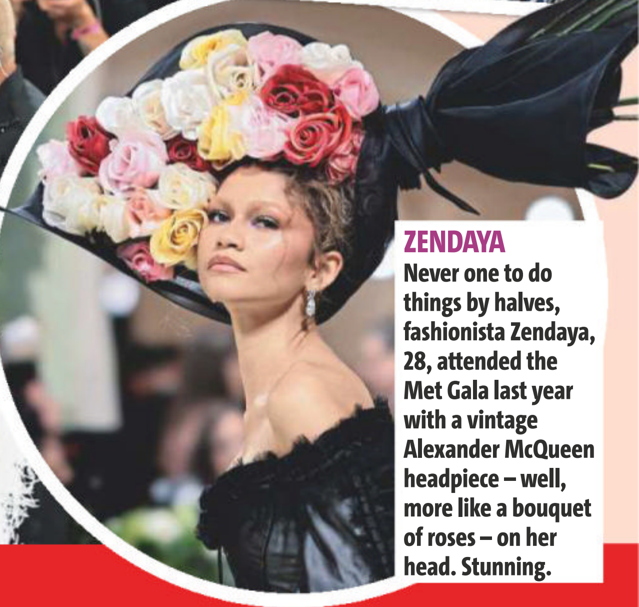
BOY GEORGE
Culture Club singer Boy George, 64, is known for his love of bold bowler hats, which he says he loves to wear because 'they hide a multitude of sins.'



BILLY PORTER
Star of stage and screen Billy, 55, had us all stunned when he turned up to the Grammy Awards in 2020 with not only a fabulous hat, but a rhinestone curtain that could be opened and closed with a remote control.



DIANA ROSS
This year, disco legend Diana, 81, returned to the coveted Met Gala after 20 years. She made quite the comeback with an 18-foot cape and a feather-brimmed hat.



ZENDAYA
Never one to do things by halves, fashionista Zendaya, 28, attended the Met Gala last year with a vintage Alexander McQueen headpiece – well, more like a bouquet of roses – on her head. Stunning.

By Amy Lo, **Pictures** Getty

Voted 'Cutest Baby' of the Year!

Rosalie

Fan favourite photo

The winning entry!

A portrait doll based on our **Such a Doll!®** *photo contest winner*

Soft **RealTouch®** *vinyl skin*

Rosalie measures 17 inches (43.2 cm) in length and is poseable. She is not a toy, but a fine collectable to be enjoyed by adult collectors. Not intended for children under 14.

Her blue eyes won our hearts!

Each year, we ask doll lovers to post their cutest babies pictures on Facebook® for our annual *Such A Doll!®* photo contest. It's never easy for us to choose a favourite, so we leave it to the fans to vote, and this year they picked a truly adorable blue-eyed sweetie named Rosalie. World-renowned portrait doll artist Ping Lau then expertly sculpted a doll so accurate to the winning photograph, it's hard to believe she's a doll and not a real baby!

Rosalie is a So Truly Real® premium-quality collector doll, handcrafted of soft *RealTouch®* vinyl to capture every feature – from that button nose to those adorably pudgy cheeks! She is artfully handpainted with *hand-rooted* hair underneath her knit hat, and she is *poseable* with a *weighted* beanbag body to make her extra cuddly. And then there's her ensemble! Our designers meticulously custom tailored every detail, from the embroidery-accented dress and knit sweater to the elegant crochet trim, in order to exactly match the photo.

A unique collecting opportunity, destined to sell quickly!

Artist-original portrait dolls by Ping Lau can sell for thousands, but ***Rosalie*** is yours for just four interest-free instalments of £39.99 – that's only £159.96 (plus £9.99 S&S)*. This edition is accompanied by a certificate of Authenticity and our famous 365-day money-back guarantee. Pay nothing now – simply complete and return your Priority Order Form today!

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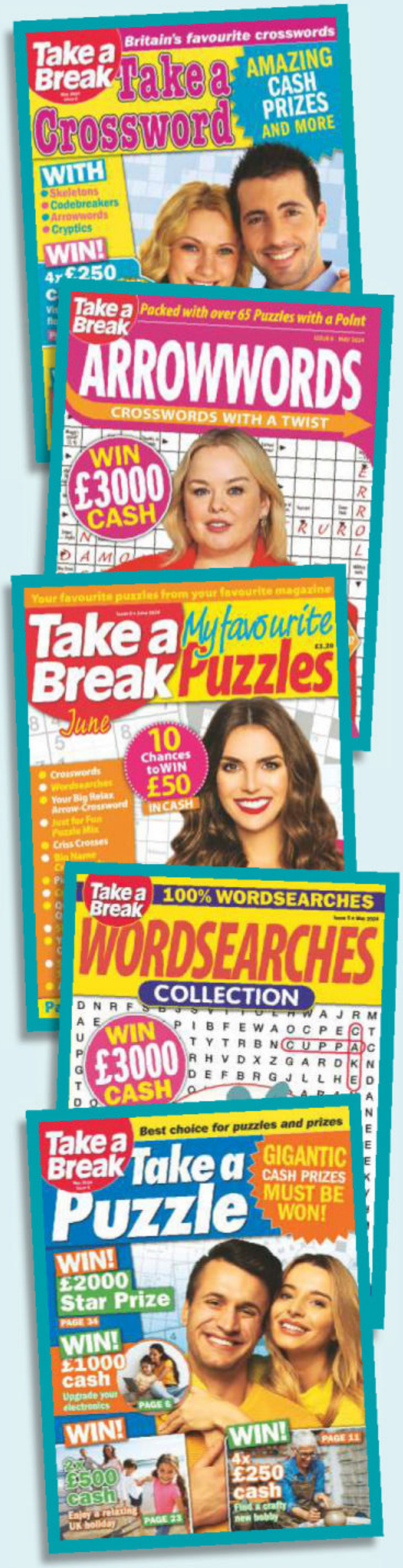
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